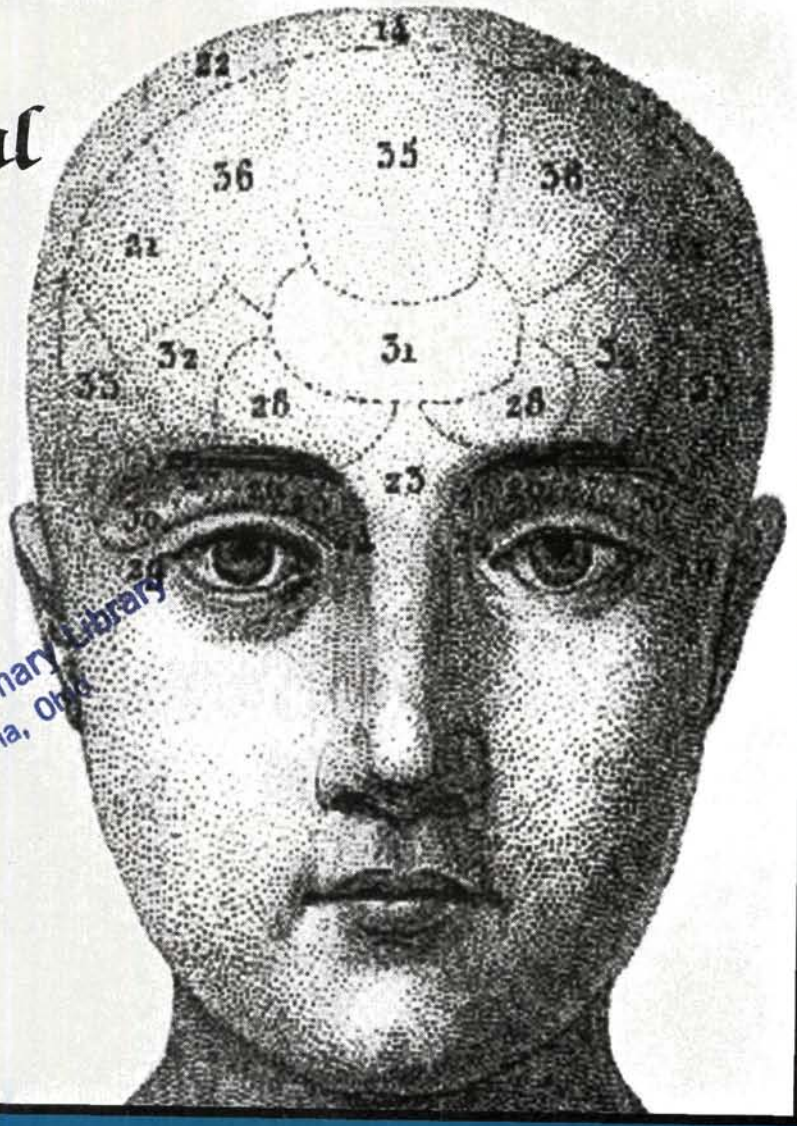
$2.25 (Canada $3.25)

January 15, 1999

COMMONWEAL

The Evangelical Mind

James Turner



St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, OH

CHRISTIAN COLLEGES?

NEIL COUGHLAN REVIEWS JAMES BURTCHAELL

********** 3-DIGIT 458
CW 00079972 12/17/99

0112

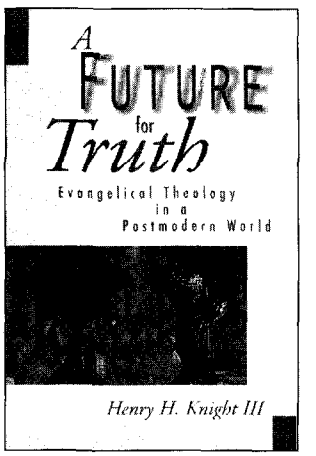
ST CHARLES LIBRARY
ST CHARLES SEMINARY
2860 US ROUTE 127
CARTHAGENA OH45822-9591

DISTRACTION

THE EDITORS

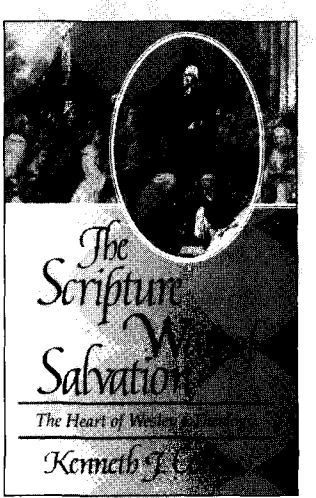
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Evangelical Voices



A Future for Truth: Evangelical Theology in a Postmodern World, *by Henry H. Knight III.* Today's societies demand that we recognize many competing claims to truth. On the one hand, evangelical theology defends historic Christian truth-claims as universal, and Christian Scripture as uniquely authoritative for everyone. Postmodernism, on the other hand, tends to abandon the search for universals. Proposing to break this impasse, Knight remains faithful to historic Christianity while giving an account of that faithfulness to a postmodern audience.
CA9-00960X. Paper, **$17.95**

Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation, *by Miroslav Volf.* Volf proposes the ideas of *exclusion* and *embrace* as theological responses the the problem of "otherness." He points toward a new vision of reconciliation that reinvigorates the biblical theology of salvation as reconciliation and takes seriously our modern experience of fragmentation and exclusion. Named by *Christianity Today* as one of the ten outstanding books of 1997.
CA9-002826. Paper, **$19.95**



The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of Wesley's Theology, *by Kenneth J. Collins.* Fundamentally a doctrinal study, this volume is historically sensitive to the subtle shifts and nuances of Wesley's continuing reflections about the processes of salvation and the nature of Christian life. Collins highlights the essential structure that undergirds and provides the framework for Wesley's way of thinking about the processes of salvation.
CA9-009626. Paper, **$18.95**

published by Abingdon Press

Cokesbury
Books • Bibles • Church Resources

CALL OR VISIT YOUR COKESBURY STORE
ORDER TOLL FREE: 1-800-672-1789
TO ORDER VIA THE INTERNET, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
www.cokesbury.com

• • •

Satisfaction Guaranteed!
Prices subject to change without notice. Shipping and handling extra.

COM-698-9

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOUNDED 1924

COMMONWEAL

January 15, 1999 / Volume CXXVI, Number 1

UPFRONT

Correspondence *Cloning, campaign reform...* 4

Editorial *Distracted nation* 5

From the archives *January 20, 1939* 6

Continuing the conversation
Robert E. McCarthy 6

COLUMNISTS

Here comes the euro
William Pfaff 7

What a priest does
John Garvey 8

SHORT TAKE

School vouchers
Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr.
Vouchers for parochial schools will get a try out in Milwaukee. The educational results should be carefully measured. 9

ARTICLES

"You look bookish enough. Have you actually written anything?"

SOMETHING TO BE RECKONED WITH
James C. Turner
With a sophisticated new journal and a roster of intellectual heavyweights, evangelicals are making a mark. 11

BACK TO THE FUTURE
Jerry Ryan 14

POETRY

Very
Just Below
Laurance Wieder 16

VERDICTS

STAGE

MINIMAL EFFECTS
Celia Wren
'Anna Karenina' & 'Moses, My Love' 17

BOOKS

The Dying of the Light
by James Tunstead Burtchaell
Neil Coughlan
Most of the colleges founded by Protestant denominations are now unapologetically secular. Will Catholic colleges suffer the same fate? 19

I Married a Communist
by Philip Roth
Rachel M. Brownstein 22

Sabbatical Journey
by Henry Nouwen
Bill Williams 23

Religion booknotes
Lawrence S. Cunningham 24

THE LAST WORD

On line
Thomas C. Widner 30

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To the Editors

On a higher level

Thank you for *Commonweal*. Thank you for assuming people can think—that they can be spoken to on a higher level of ideas. *Commonweal* is a "throwback" to an earlier time when thinking was valuable. Thanks.

PATRICK J. MURPHY
Corona, Calif.

Agassiz's method

Thomas A. Shannon ["Remaking Ourselves," December 4, 1998] confuses categories of thinking when he attempts to use a fact in biology (differentiation) to prove a fact in morality. This is not unlike Professor Agassiz attempting to determine the degree of intelligence by measuring the size of skulls, or the attemp to determine emotions by photographing facial expressions, or lie "detector" tests, or throwing a clock out the window to see time fly. This is the school that holds if your barometer says it is raining, it is raining, no matter what the weather is doing.

The truly interesting question, the underlying question, is: Why is this important? *Cui bono* is the old tag. The answer comes before the question. Biologists wish to conduct experiments on the human body. It would be immoral to conduct experiments on persons. Therefore, the human body in certain stages is not a person. Thus did Professor Agassiz work. Beginning with the principle that certain racial groups of persons were less intelligent, he looked for distinctive physical characteristics. Earlier in the century it was bumps on heads. Later in the century it was the shape of the ears. Now it is blastocysts and blastomeres at the beginning of life and the degrees of "vegetableness" in the middle, or at the end.

GABRIEL AUSTIN
New York, N.Y.

Unique from the start

I admire Thomas A. Shannon and his work, and usually agree with him—especially on creating hybrids. But I don't understand his view that a human embryo has to be "individualized" in order to meet a critical criterion for human personhood (translated as protection from various kinds of experimentation?). I also refuse to use the term "pre-implantation embryo," considering it to be a political term, much like "resident alien," which puts lives at risk.

My point is that having a unique human genetic identity appears to be much more of a valid criterion for protection than being an "entity" that is individualized. If the concept of an individual is defined as an "entity that cannot be divided or, if it is, it becomes two halves neither of which can survive on its own," then what about the cloning of adult organisms? And isn't fluidity or pluripotent capacity of body cells becoming more recognized in new research? On the other hand, from a "psychobiosocial" point of view the process of individualization continues throughout life.

Now for Scotus. I know that Scotus is great and Shannon is his prophet but I do have a question. Did Scotus ever claim that the "common nature" of a horse existed in actual time and space apart from an individual horse-entity? Or is this only possible in the eye of the bioethicist?

SIDNEY CALLAHAN
Ardsley-on-Hudson, N.Y.

The author replies

Because embryogenesis, as well as all biological developments, is a process, I do not acknowledge personhood at all stages of development. At some stages, biological presuppositions for various claims, moral or personal, are absent. Thus a necessary, but not sufficient, criterion for personhood is individuality because to be a person one must first be an individual. To be rational, there must be at least a neural system or a brain. The presence of such physical substrates do not guarantee a person, but one cannot have a person without them.

To Mr. Austin I would say that as the pre-implantation embryo progresses through phases of development, its moral standing increases: because more of the biological presuppositions for personhood are present. Thus an individualized embryo would have greater moral standing than a blastocyst because of this critical presupposition for personhood. This argument attempts to be faithful to the biological realities while also recognizing the moral claims of this developing entity; but I think the moral claim needs to be measured in relation to the reality we encounter.

There is also an equivocation on individuation when Callahan slides from a physiological discussion to a psychobiological one. Obviously these are related, but the point of my discussion is that a biological process is a precondition of the other.

Fluidity of the cells of the developing organism is not a new discovery; discussion of the totipotency of the embryo can be found, for example, in the 1910 *Encyclopedia Brittanica*. What is new are the rapidly developing technologies that provide both access to and means of intervention to the organism at the earliest stages.

Finally, a cell can be taken from an individualized organism and its genetic program restarted in a host egg resulting in a clone. Taking such an individual cell from such an individualized entity is not dividing it and thus the individuality of the donor is maintained while its genetic code is replicated and provides the basis for a new individual.

As for Scotus, clearly no one has ever seen a "common nature." Scotus is an epistemological realist, not a nominalist. Therefore, something in reality must correspond to our universal idea—that which is common to all

(Continued on page 28)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STAFF

Editor: **Margaret O'Brien Steinfels**
Executive Editor: **Paul Baumann**
Managing Editor: **Patrick Jordan**
Production Editor: **Tiina Aleman**
Senior Writer: **Robert G. Hoyt**
Business Manager: **Gregory Wilpert**
Poetry: **Rosemary Deen**
Screen: **Richard Alleva**
Media: **Frank McConnell**
Stage: **Celia Wren**
Columnists: **John Garvey, Abigail McCarthy, E.J. Dionne, Jr., Sidney Callahan, William Pfaff**
Interns: **Christian Zwahlen, Andrew Rosato, Maurice Timothy Reidy**
Staff: **Harriette Balsky, Carmen P. Alava, Sandra Smith**
Advertising Manager: **Ruth E. Taylor**
Publisher Emeritus: **Edward S. Skillin**

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly except Christmas/New Year's; and monthly July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, NY, 10115. Telephone: (212) 662-4200. E-mail: commonweal@msn.com. Web: http://www.commonwealmagazine.org. Fax: (212) 662-4183. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, ME 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 475 Riverside Dr. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Commonweal, 475 Riverside Dr., Room 405, New York, NY 10115.

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest, and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, OH 44691. *Commonweal* articles also are available at many libraries and research facilities on CD-ROM and in electronic data bases. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional offices. Copyright © 1999 Commonweal Foundation. Single Copy, $2.25. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $44; Canada, $47; foreign, $50. Special two-year rate: U.S. $75; Canada, $81; foreign, $87. Annual rates for air-mail delivery outside U.S.: Western Hemisphere, $84; Europe, $89; other parts of the world, $99. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover, Baumann, Aleman, *The Complete Encyclopedia of Illustration* (Park Lane); p. 3, Schwadron, Rothco; p. 3, Rosegg; p. 7, Ray, Rotcho; pp. 10, 11, 23, 26, Valerry; p. 14, Charlot; pp. 17, 24, Ross, Rothco; pp. 19, 22, Baloo, Rothco; columnist portraits, Elaine Mills.

http://www.commonwealmagazine.org

Distracted nation

To most observers "The Contract with America," Congressman Newt Gingrich's 1994 brainchild, appears to have slipped beyond the political horizon. The Republican campaign promise to reduce the power, size, and reach of government has come, over the last four years, to be regarded as a failure, except insofar as some of its features have been adopted by the Democrats. Yet scanning the desultory process of government in Washington this past year and anticipating the standstill to come as the Senate debates the articles of impeachment against President Bill Clinton, it seems that our political life may have been greatly diminished not only by Mr. Clinton but by the apparently moribund Republican revolution as well. Is it possible that the Republicans have carried out their revolution by other means, namely putting the country's political needs on hold while titillating the media and distracting the citizenry with the salacious details of the Lewinsky affair? There is more than one way to reduce the influence of government. Relentless partisan pursuit of impeachment and conviction is one of them.

As the scandal of Mr. Clinton's behavior and his lying has gradually emerged over the past year, his capacity to govern has been repeatedly questioned. But is this really the issue? What about the capacity of the Congress itself, to examine and legislate, to focus on the critical questions facing the nation? Education, healthcare policy, campaign finance, and Social Security reform have been on the waiting line at least through the last two congressional sessions. How little our elected representatives have done. How little the American people, more or less indifferent to impeachment and to politics, have demanded of them. And how little this situation seems likely to change in the 106th Congress.

Nor are domestic issues alone in suffering neglect. Congress has relatively less power than the president to make and execute foreign policy. Even so, it squanders the powers it does possesses. What Congress has not obstructed by petty fogging committee quarreling, it has settled by doing nothing. Dues long owed to the United Nations remain unpaid, and this despite the selection of Kofi Annan as secretary general, the man with whom the Congress said it could work. Our policies toward North Korea and Russia are shrouded in ambiguity and uncertainty, though both countries represent dangerous and volatile situations to the whole world. Where are the hearings that might throw some light on what the State Department is doing and planning to do? Indeed, concentrating the diplomatic mind by asking questions in public might resolve some of that ambiguity. The Middle East continues in disarray, but ironically it is only Mr. Clinton who seems to have time to pay attention. If Republican senators, Trent Lott for one, really believe that the December bombing of Iraq was an effort by Clinton to forestall an impeachment vote, why haven't Secretaries Madeleine Albright and William Cohen been called before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for explanations? Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is on the brink of destroying the peace process. Wouldn't congressional hearings send a warning shot that there will be limits to U.S. support if the peace process fails? And as the Israelis pursue their reckless course, what is the United States planning to do if the Palestinians declare them-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

selves a sovereign state? Stand back in surprise?

But governance is not just policymaking. Attention must be paid as well to the structure and functioning of government—particularly if, as the Republicans preach, we are to have less of it. But agencies that required rethinking after the end of the cold war—most obviously the Defense Department and the military—continue to be seen as pork barrel projects first and instruments of foreign policy only secondarily. The emerging record of the CIA's assessment failures and errors of judgment during the cold war alone should raise questions about the seriousness of congressional oversight, especially of an organizational culture that seems to foster qualities the exact opposite of those needed by an "intelligence" agency (*see*, Senator Daniel Moynihan's astute new book, *Secrecy* [Yale University Press, 1998]).

Some have argued that finally all of this is Mr. Clinton's responsibility. There would be no paralysis if he hadn't had sex in the Oval Office, if he hadn't lied about it, if he hadn't covered up and misled others who testified on his behalf. And now, if he would just resign, Washington could get back to business. As derelict as the president has been, we doubt that his dismissal from office would free Congress to do the nation's work. The Clinton scandal serves Republican interests in more ways than one. Were Clinton to go, there would be other reasons to govern by not governing. As it is, we are now the world's only superpower, but acting without great intelligence, without serious policy planning or significant political deliberation and oversight either at the White House or in Congress. Prosperity fosters the Republican illusion that minimal and quiescent government is good government. At home as abroad, we squander seven fat years on scandal, while the nation's and the world's real needs stand waiting for attention. That is a scandal and it hardly garners a headline.

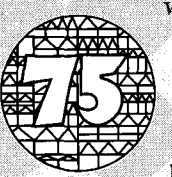
Continuing the Conversation

Memo: To House Speaker Dennis Hastert. Mr. Speaker, you need to demonstrate to the country that the slim Republican majority is concerned with more than the scandals of the Clinton administration and that the House Republicans' focus on the Lewinsky matter was based on more than a desire to embarrass a president who has consistently outmaneuvered them.

A strong policy-based offensive will show the country that the Republican majority has the resolve to govern. What I like to call "progressive conservatives" made the Republicans a majority party in 1994. The new congressional leadership needs to articulate the principles we hold dear. The disappointment many of us have felt, evidenced in the failure of the Republican base to vote in large numbers in the most recent election, is not so much that our goals—limiting abortion and encouraging local community renewal—were not fulfilled. What really disappointed us was that a seemingly sympathetic Congress did so little to implement those goals.

No effort, for example, has been made to pursue an effective program to protect fetal life. The ban on partial-birth abortion was a significant first step. Still, Clinton's veto continues to make such legislation unlikely to become law. Efforts to label Clinton a prochoice extremist have also failed. More imaginative strategies are needed. For example, many prochoice advocates offered legislation that would prohibit all postviability abortions, with the only exception made for a threat of grievous physical injury or death to the mother. Prolifers rejected this, noting that all pregnancies pose a risk to the mother's health. They have a point. Still, the prohibition on postviability abortions could be redrafted to address such concerns. If that were done, a bipartisan prolife

From the archives



By far the most radically important thing said by President Roosevelt in his address on the state of the Union was what he had to say concerning religion as the primal, indeed the unique source of human liberties—and, hence, of the highest values associated with our form of government. Indeed, I think it the most important thing said by any secular statesman in modern times. It differed essentially, it seems to me, from the pious platitudes and conventional appeals to religious sentiment used by so many politicians and publicists, but really having little save a purely sentimental relation to the realities of government or economics. So far as my own newspaper reading shows, among the commentators only Walter Lippmann and Dorothy Thompson recognized the significance of the president's utterance. But I think that its recognition as an epoch-marking public paper will come, for I believe that a great part of our population, Protestants, Jews, and Catholics, and many upholders of the Western traditions of society—which depend upon the truth proclaimed so admirably by Mr. Roosevelt for their preservation—are uniting in a common consciousness of the practical value of what too long has been relegated to private as distinct from public life and interests.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS *was the founding editor of* Commonweal. *Reprinted from January 20, 1939.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

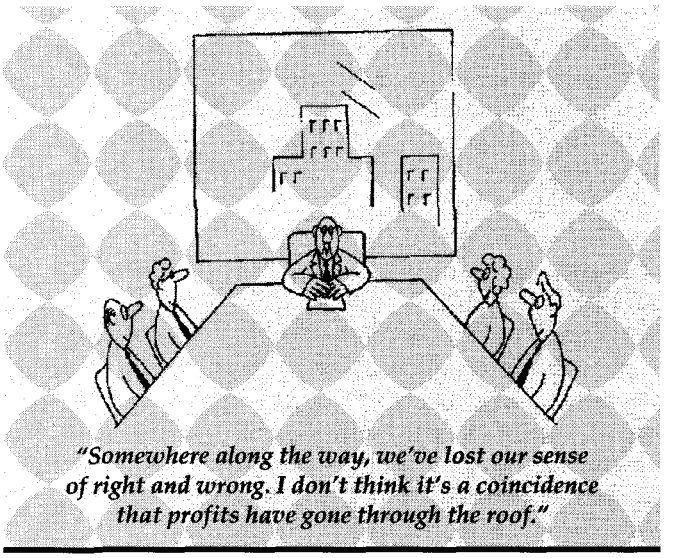
coalition might emerge. The passage of such a law might also influence the Supreme Court to accept some meaningful restrictions on abortion.

Equally important, Republicans should push a broad initiative to build stronger communities and local institutions. Such an initiative would provide a positive alternative vision to the Democratic party's Washington-centered programs while complementing Republican efforts to devolve government. Passage of the American Community Renewal Act, which has not yet been brought before the full House for consideration, is the way to start.

Since taking control of the House in 1994, Republican congressional majorities have vigorously sought to downsize government and move decision making to the local level. The moral argument for such devolution is that it would unshackle the creative power of the private sector, encouraging individual action and building stronger community institutions. To skeptics, such efforts are an abandonment of established governmental social concerns, particularly for the less fortunate. The absence of a strong progressive conservative agenda for the poor has seemed to validate the skeptics' views.

To address this issue, Republicans should push education vouchers (or refundable tuition tax credits), expand the use of housing vouchers (in lieu of assignments to specified housing units), and end or ease the marriage tax penalty. Energy should also be put behind providing larger tax credits for charitable giving and implementing a new tax credit to encourage commercial development in economically depressed areas.

Such community-based policies contributed to the recent electoral success of Republican governors and were critical to the success of progressive conservatives in the 1980s. Although opposed to increases in the minimum wage and determined to reduce direct housing assistance, conservatives did put forward alternative programs to achieve similar goals, such as expanding the earned-income tax credit and developing the now highly successful low-income housing tax credit to encourage private-sector housing. It was the positive aspects of that agenda that inspired confidence among voters. That confidence has evaporated in the last four years. By addressing these issues the Republican House majority can restore vigor to their party and to their country. □



"Somewhere along the way, we've lost our sense of right and wrong. I don't think it's a coincidence that profits have gone through the roof."

Robert E. McCarthy is an attorney in New York City.

OF SEVERAL MINDS

WILLIAM PFAFF

HERE COMES THE EURO

New challenger to the dollar

The arrival of a common European currency is a watershed in the relationship of the United States to the new Europe. It is the most important event for European integration since the Treaties of Rome in 1957. It promises to be the most important event for the United States since communism collapsed.

Since 1989 the United States has been, in economic and military terms, the most powerful state in the world. Washington has imagined no serious challenge to American power until the distant future. Then China, or perhaps a recovered Russia, might test the United States. Europe is disregarded as politically divided, its economy overregulated and undynamic, historically "finished."

The euro defies that assumption. The single currency cannot help but pose a financial and economic challenge to Washington, and that eventually will take on a political weight which neither side now wishes to contemplate. Washington, and most Europeans, have seen European monetary union as a step taken in the context of Atlantic cooperation, which has benefited both sides for five decades.

This misses the point. For the first time in postwar history, vital and "sovereign" interests of the United States and Western Europe will become engaged in what game-theorists describe as "zero-sum" competition. It is "zero-sum" because the gain of one will be the loss of the other. Both sides are accustomed to the "game" which has prevailed since the Marshall Plan and Europe's reconstruction, in which coalition and economic cooperation profited both sides. The arrival of European monetary union changes the game.

The world economic agenda will no longer automatically be set by the United States, through the Federal Reserve's power to set the key global interest rate. The European Central Bank will set its own interest rate for an economy that is nearly as large as America's, and is a more important trading power. Europe's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

single currency will automatically become a competitor to the dollar as an international reserve currency—an internationally recognized store of secure value—and as a denominator of international trade.

The European economies enjoy a trade surplus, while the United States has a $200-billion annual trade deficit and owes a trillion dollars abroad. The euro zone's attractions as a place to secure one's funds is obvious. The economist Lester Thurow wrote a year ago in the *NewYork Review of Books* that people will initially go into the euro to hedge their investments, "but if enough people hedge their bets and the dollar starts to fall, a run on the dollar could easily begin."

So long as oil, minerals, other commodities, and high-value manufactures such as commercial aircraft, are priced in dollars, the United States benefits from perfectly stable prices. The European Airbus, for example, like the European commercial space launcher, Ariane, is built with materials and components paid for in European currencies, but the product is sold in dollars. Boeing's material and labor costs are all in dollars. The company does not have the costly problem of "covering" currency movements it cannot control.

American corporations and banks functioning in Europe will enjoy the same benefits as European industry and banking, pricing their products in euros and being paid in euros. However, domestic-based American export industry will lose the dominant-currency advantage it has enjoyed for fifty years. The same will occur if the oil and other commodities producers begin to denominate their goods in euros.

The Japanese government, and some economists elsewhere, have proposed that Europe, the United States, and Japan set exchange-rate "target zones" so as to reestablish the stable international currency relationships which existed under the Bretton Woods system—ended when the United States "floated" the dollar in 1971. Washington refuses, following the neoliberal economic orthodoxy of the last two decades, which says that only the market can decide currency values. Therefore the dollar, the new euro, and the yen now will all float against one another. (The Canadian ambassador to the OECD, Kimon Valaskakis, has recently drawn attention to the mathematical proposition in systems theory "which claims that when three systems co-exist in the same environment the result is chaos.")

The United States has known only currency stability. The dollar's value was fixed to gold until 1971, and it remained the dominant world currency even under the floating exchange rates system that followed. The dominant political position of the United States today is integrally linked to the dominant position of the dollar, as well as to the country's economic and industrial preeminence—which the Europeans are also challenging.

The euro's threat is to that dominance. European monetary union is not designed to make a political challenge to the United States. It is motivated strictly by the Europeans' interest in further integration of their own economies. It nonetheless is a major step toward reestablishing a world of balance, where there is more than one center of economic power, and—inevitably—of political influence. Washington, and the Europeans, must come to terms with this, which may not be easy. □

© *Los Angeles Times Syndicate*

OF SEVERAL MINDS

JOHN GARVEY

WHAT A PRIEST DOES

Little frustrations, humbling duties

Recently I went through a period of deep frustration. I am a priest in a small but growing Orthodox church in New York, and small churches have all the advantages and disadvantages of family, or life in a small town. You are stuck with your relatives and neighbors, and with the members of your congregation. When it goes well it is wonderful: people can know and help one another, bearing one another's burdens; or they can pay attention only to the failings of others, seeing none of their own, and judge one another harshly. And everyone has a particular expectation of the priest who, if he tries to meet them all, will be doing something strange to himself and no doubt to the gospel. When you are caught in the middle of negative currents the dark side of all this can loom large, and make you wonder why you ever took this up in the first place.

I was in a dark mood one week recently, and it was compounded by a particularly busy and pointless burst of work: a lot of what a priest does in a small community is wait for people who don't show up on time, or at all, to do things like fix the boiler or wax the floor, and there are meetings, sometimes contentious, of the church board, and mailings to get out, on top of the usual pastoral work. The stuff that doesn't matter, or that involves you with confrontational members of the congregation, seems sometimes (it did at this time) to outweigh the things that do matter.

Then I visited a church member in the hospital, an old Albanian who only weeks before had been full of life. He's in his eighties and has Parkinson's disease, but always had plenty of energy and liked to preside in his corner of the church hall during the coffee hour. Suddenly he had difficulty eating, surgery was done, and it turned out he had a cancer that had metasticized nearly everywhere. On my first visit he was puzzled and unhappy, but could talk about what happened. On my second visit he had grown much more gaunt, except for his distended stomach, and he was quieter, resigned, but still able to talk about a young couple he had befriended. The husband had brought him pictures of their newborn baby, and he told me, "They're a very nice couple. She's a beautiful woman." He was still attentive to other people, but it was an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

effort. The last time I saw him he had gone into himself. When I touched him he opened his eyes and recognized me, but could only groan deeply. I told him what I was going to do, he nodded, and I anointed him and said the prayer for the departing of the soul.

The next day was Sunday, and the epistle was Colossians: "For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." The emphasis on the fact that baptism means our baptism into Christ's death, and the hope of his resurrection, is part of our faith. Seeing someone dying puts all of this on the line. It is hard to see the glory to come, though the cross is certainly apparent.

A lot of people visited as my parishioner approached the end. One woman noticed how uncomfortable he was because he was unshaven, and tried to get someone to deal with that. (She succeeded.) Other people fed him, gave him water to drink, tried in every way to serve him. Their attention to him, their concern, moved me deeply. None of them are blood relatives (unusual in our parish, where many people are related), but all thought of him as someone who was somehow in the family, and they were right.

I have seen this sort of thing before: people trying to get quarreling relatives to reconcile, for example, or someone wealthy who, without telling anyone, is of great help to a new immigrant family—I learned about his generosity from them, not from him. And in some confessions you see someone truly struggling to live the life we have in Christ. When I was in my teens, a Catholic priest told me that he found hearing confessions an encouraging and moving part of his priesthood. I couldn't imagine why, then, but I understand now.

Before a recent meeting of the clergy of the Orthodox Church in America a questionnaire was sent to priests. One interesting set of questions and answers had to do with how they felt about their work. Almost a third said they had regretted, at least at some point, the decision to become a priest. Almost half said that they had considered leaving parish ministry for some other form of ministry. But a majority said they had no regrets about becoming priests; 63 percent wanted to work as priests for as long as possible, and 60 percent of the retired clergy are still active at some level in pastoral work. Seventy-nine percent of the retired clergy "feel a sense of gratitude" for their work as priests.

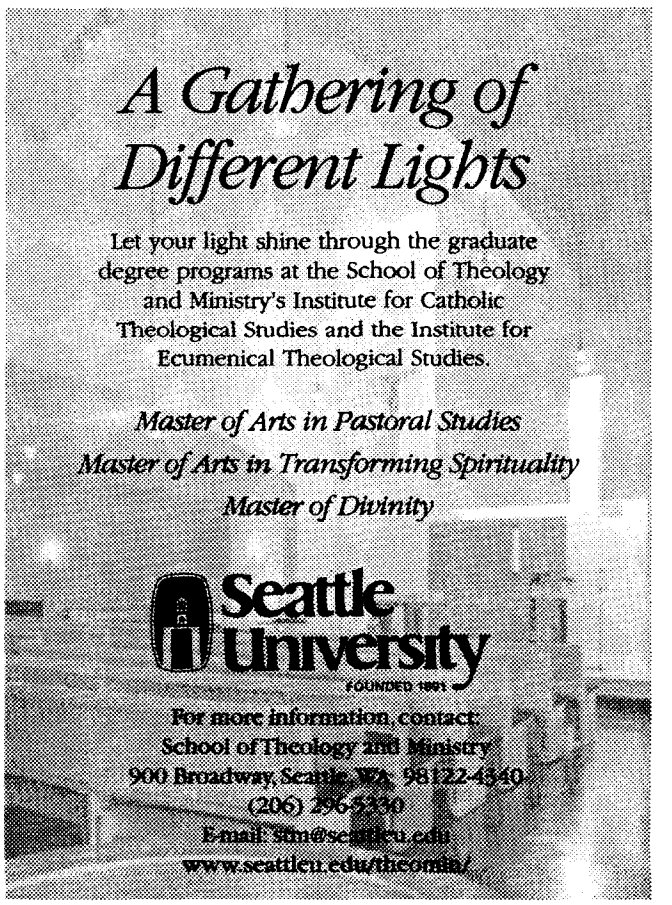
That's a pretty healthy number. After my dark moment and an encounter with the more important level of what being part of a church community means, I see more of what it means to be a witness, and it is encouraging. You aren't necessarily witnessing, in the sense of revealing something, yourself, though one sense might lead to the other. You are, instead, able to watch grace at work in people's lives, and although that can and will take you to deeply sad places, it can also be deeply wonderful. □

Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr.

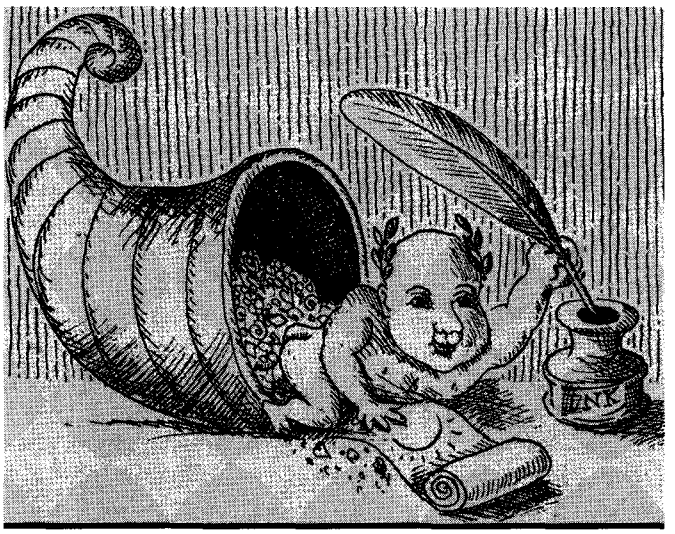
SCHOOL VOUCHERS

Some testing, please

In a 1932 case that allowed the state of Oklahoma to control the manufacturing of ice, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis wrote in dissent: "The business of supplying ice is not only a necessity, like that of supplying food or clothing or shelter, but the legislature could also consider that it is one which lends itself peculiarly to monopoly." If the manufacturing of ice "lends itself peculiarly to monopoly," the monopolization of the transmission of ideas and values in education is all the more peculiar. In *Pierce* v. *Society of Sisters* (1925), the Court had ruled that the states could not literally monopolize education in the sense of prohibiting all competitors to its own schools, as Oregon—egged on by the Ku Klux Klan in requiring attendance at public schools—had tried to do. But in a series of cases since 1947 the Court has, with a few notable exceptions, ruled that public financial support for religious schools is prohibited by the First Amendment's religion clause. The net effect of these decisions has been a virtual monopoly of tax dollars for the schools that the government operates.


A Gathering of Different Lights
Let your light shine through the graduate degree programs at the School of Theology and Ministry's Institute for Catholic Theological Studies and the Institute for Ecumenical Theological Studies.
Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies
Master of Arts in Transforming Spirituality
Master of Divinity
Seattle University
FOUNDED 1891
For more information, contact:
School of Theology and Ministry
900 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122-4340
(206) 296-5330
E-mail: stm@seattleu.edu
www.seattleu.edu/theomin/

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Commentators of all stripes agree that the Court's jurisprudence on this matter has been unsatisfactory. University of California law professor Jesse Choper describes the Court's decisions as "*ad hoc* judgments which are incapable of being reconciled on any principled basis." For example, New York may lend secular textbooks to children attending religious schools, but Pennsylvania and Ohio may not give maps to a religious school. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) pondered what the Court would do with an atlas, a book of maps. At one point the Court almost gave up on its duty to instruct clearly on constitutional values, stating that their teaching "sacrifices clarity and predictability for flexibility." Rigid, absolute lines may not be desirable when the practices of thousands of school districts are at issue, but doctrinal chaos is not a good alternative. The most hopeful sign of clarity emerging from chaos on these matters was the articulation of a clear principle in the 1997 *Agostini* case, in which the Court allowed public school teachers to provide remedial education for poor children on the premises of religious schools. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote that there is no impermissible financial incentive to advance religion when "aid is allocated on the basis of neutral, secular criteria that neither favor nor disfavor religion, and is made available to both religious and secular beneficiaries on a nondiscriminatory basis."

An editorial in these pages noted that recent rulings of the Court "suggest that benefits permitted to secular private enterprises should not be denied to similar religious enterprises" ("Good Exercise," July 17, 1998). The editorial was commenting on the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. The purpose of this program was to give low-income parents an opportunity to have their children educated outside that city's embattled public schools. Poor people are empowered by this program to do exactly what people of means would do: get better value elsewhere. Last June the Wisconsin Supreme Court sustained the program against constitutional challenges. Although both parties urged the Supreme Court of the United States to review the case, the Court declined to do so last November. The debate over the constitutionality and policy wisdom of vouchers will assuredly go on apace. But this debate will now have to be informed more by facts than by predilections fueled by passions about the separation of church and state.

Why do facts matter in the constitutional calculus? Because one of the Court's three tests governing the permissibility of funding for religious education asks whether the primary and principal effect of a program is to advance religion. One can speculate—as lawyers and judges do when they "think like lawyers"—about the purposes of programs, but to inquire about their effects is to ask an empirical question that deserves an empirical answer. Regrettably, the litigation process has studiously avoided serious social science data about religious schools accumulated by researchers of national stature, such as the pioneers James Coleman and Andrew Greeley. Never will you find a reference in such legal decisions to Anthony Bryk, Peter Holland, and Valerie Lee, who demonstrated in *Catholic Schools and the Common Good* (1993) that Catholic schools are particularly effective (if I may use that nonlegal word) with low-income African-American and Latino students. Litigation on school choice has been not only unscientific in the sense that lawyers and judges routinely ignore relevant data. It has even been antiscientific in the sense that the outcome in most cases has been an injunction prohibiting any state or local community from daring to attempt any experiment that might provide data relevant to the empirical "test" under which the cases were purportedly being decided.

In the Oklahoma ice case mentioned above, Justice Brandeis concluded his dissent: "To stay experimentation in things social and economic is a grave responsibility. Denial of the right to experiment may be fraught with serious consequences to the nation. It is one of the happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous state may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country. This Court has the power to prevent an experiment.... But, in the exercise of this high power, we must be ever on our guard, lest we erect our prejudices into legal principles. If we would guide by the light of reason, we must let our minds be bold."

We can be grateful that the current Court, if not bold enough to write an opinion expressly holding school vouchers permissible, has at least had the good sense to allow "a single courageous state" to "serve as a laboratory." From the experiment with vouchers in Milwaukee we will undoubtedly learn a lot about benefits that flow from vouchers and perils that may be latent within any program of support for religious schools. Thus both advocates and opponents of vouchers have something to rejoice in. Both sides will now have an empirical basis upon which to ground and test their claims. In the history of the long and intense debate over aid to religious schools, that is a big step forward. □

Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr., *a frequent contributor, is professor of law at Valparaiso University, in Valparaiso, Indiana.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SOMETHING TO BE RECKONED WITH

The evangelical mind awakens

James C. Turner

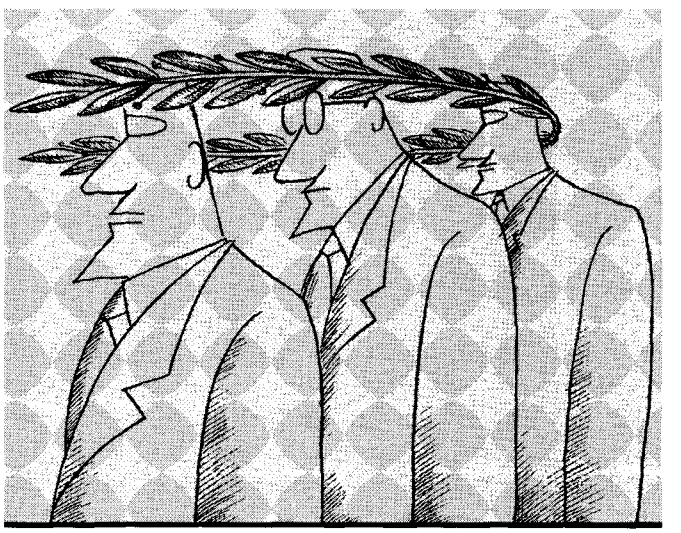
In 1980, the sleeping giant of American politics awoke. Evangelical Protestants comprise, along with Catholics (whom they approximate in number), one of the two largest religious blocs in the United States. The entry into electoral politics of a hefty portion of them as a self-aware Christian Right helped to ensure the triumph of Ronald Reagan and to transform and immensely complicate the affairs of the Republican party. The story is famous, Newt Gingrich's fall from grace providing only the latest, and surely far from the last, act in a riveting drama.

Many fewer nonevangelicals, most of them academics, are aware of a parallel and equally dramatic turning in evangelical *intellectual* life—though one without the rightward political bent. In 1995 appeared a new bimonthly journal called *Books and Culture*. The magazine is a self-conscious adaptation of the *New York Review of Books*, right down to the newspaper stock on which it is printed; and the editors of *Books and Culture* hoped that their periodical might do for evangelicals what the *NYRB* has done for secular intellectual life; that is, provide a forum in which academic and freelance intellectuals engage with gusto a general educated public. Like the *NYRB*, *Books and Culture* has assembled a stable of writers who repeat in its pages, many of them well known to each other. But, whereas the *NYRB* came into existence as the more-or-less chance result of a newspaper strike, *Books and Culture* culminates a kind of evangelical Long March through American intellectual life.

The names regularly on its pages represent almost a roster of the revolutionaries who have led this struggle. Among them are such widely respected academic intellectuals as the historians Mark Noll of Wheaton College in Illinois and Nathan Hatch and George Marsden of Notre Dame; the philosophers Nicholas Wolterstorff of Yale and Alvin Plantinga of Notre Dame; and Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Theological Seminary. It is more than a curious coincidence that Hatch and Noll were classmates at Wheaton College and that Marsden, Wolterstorff, Plantinga, and Mouw once taught together on the faculty of Calvin College in Michigan (an institution to which we shall have occasion to recur). For Wheaton and especially Calvin have been seedbeds of an intellectual renaissance within American evangelicalism (broadly defined: about which more later, as well) that has gone far beyond theology to establish a visible evangelical presence in literary scholarship, psychology, history, philosophy, and other fields.

Both Plantinga and Wolterstorff have delivered the revered Gifford Lectures (which puts them in a company with William James, Etienne Gilson, and Rudolf Bultmann). Hatch's *Democratization of American Christianity* (Yale) is the standard work on the defining events of the nineteenth-century religious history of the United States. Marsden's *Soul of the American University* (Oxford) ranks among the most talked-about academic books of the past decade. Similar plaudits could be accorded other *Books and Culture* authors. Roger Lundin's *Emily Dickinson* (Eerdmans) is one of the most sensitive studies of that poet. David Lyle Jeffrey's recent encyclopedic analysis of the Bible in English literature was widely received as a magnificent work of scholarship. These scholars are in no sense confined within some narrow evangelical discourse; they speak to, and are heeded by, academics of all stripes in their various disciplines. And they strive as well to speak to a wider audience.

Yet, in so speaking, they have had something distinctive to say. They are not standard-issue scholars. As believing Christians, they understand the import of religious faith in everyday lives. They take theological ideas seriously. They refuse to reduce belief to an epiphenomenon of social forces



James C. Turner *is director of the Erasmus Institute at the University of Notre Dame. His* The Liberal Education of Charles Eliot Norton *will be published later this year by Johns Hopkins University Press.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or material circumstances. Thus, while conforming fully to the canons of secular, mainstream scholarship, they have helped to nurture in the academy a heightened sensitivity to Christian faith as a factor important in its own right. They have hardly conquered the high citadels of academe, and they have a long way to go before becoming anything like a major presence in the universities, but they have made their presence felt.

In part the influence flows from organization. Evangelical scholars have developed a cadre of learned societies parallel to the larger disciplinary associations that largely regulate American academic life. There is a Society of Christian Philosophers to match the American Philosophical Association, Christians in Political Science alongside the American Political Science Association, a Conference on Faith and History affiliated with the American Historical Association, and so on. But these groups, while founded by evangelicals, are no longer exclusively comprised of them. The current president of Christians in Political Science, for instance, is a Roman Catholic. And this indicates another key to the success of the new evangelical intellectuals: cooperation with other Christians concerned about revivifying Christianity in the life of the mind.

As recently as 1970, probably no credible prophet would have forecast these developments. The dilapidated state in which evangelical intellectual life found itself during the middle decades of the twentieth century was more than a little ironic. For much of the nineteenth century, an informal evangelical establishment had come close to dominating cultural life in the United States. But in the 1880s and 1890s battles between fundamentalists and modernists (as these two blocs would come to be called after 1900) effectively destroyed this evangelical near-hegemony. In the 1920s—the decade of the infamous Scopes trial—fundamentalism was decisively defeated within the mainline Protestant churches. Thereafter the fundamentalists withdrew into the periphery of American culture, making scarcely any contribution to the nation's intellectual life.

The rise of the so-called New Evangelicalism after World War II loosened the rigidities of fundamentalism and, *via* the populist revivalism most famously exemplified in Billy Graham, expanded the numbers of evangelicals; but it did little to bring them back into the intellectual mainstream. As recently as 1994 the distinguished historian Mark Noll could write, in the first sentence of a widely noticed book, that *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Eerdmans) "is that there is not much of an evangelical mind." Within their own boundaries evangelicals did, however, nurture distinctive habits of thought. The more unchanging among them retained a nineteenth-century approach to natural science, which led them into creationism, and a "dispensationalist" and literalist biblical hermeneutic, which predisposed them to apocalyptic prediction at the drop of a crisis in the Mideast. It is from this self-enclosed world that the new evangelical intellectuals have emerged in the last few decades, into a full engagement with contemporary culture. It is, indeed, *because of* their distress that their fellow believers *had* so shut themselves off from the larger life of the mind that a small cadre of evangelical academics decided a decade or so ago to struggle explicitly against such anti-intellectual isolationism. *Books and Culture* is the latest result.

Roman Catholics of a certain age will be inclined to draw an analogy to the experience of American Catholic intellectuals in the wake of the Second Vatican Council and the near-simultaneous collapse of the intellectual hegemony of neo-Thomism. In the 1960s, Catholics likewise stepped out of a kind of intellectual ghetto and became full and equal participants in the broader intellectual life of the United States. But, although the structural similarity is remarkable, the parallel is misleading. Whatever the weaknesses of American Catholic culture in the first half of the twentieth century, its intellectual life was rich and vigorous. Neo-Thomism tied it to a deep and sophisticated tradition of philosophic speculation; the international character of the church connected Americans (even if as distinctly junior partners) with the brilliance of the Catholic Revival—with writers as various and shining as Jacques Maritain, Christopher Dawson, and Georges Bernanos.

There was nothing equivalent in the mainstream of American evangelicalism. Nineteenth-century evangelicalism had produced intellectuals of real stature—Charles Hodge, James McCosh, James Dwight Dana—but the churches that nurtured such minds—the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians—went the modernist route in the twentieth century. The denominations from which came the vast majority of fundamentalists and, later, New Evangelicals—such as the Southern Baptists, the Church of Christ, and the various Pentecostal groups—were populist in character, little attuned to the life of the mind and often suspicious of it. A professorial acquaintance of mine is a loyal member of the Church of Christ who works hard to renew links between Christianity and academic thinking; when asked why he doesn't pay more attention specifically to the distinctive intellectual traditions of his own denomination, he raised his eyebrows and asked wryly, "Just what would those be?"

Given these facts, the evangelical intellectual revival seems genuinely puzzling. How did a religious movement that has historically produced preachers rather than professors (and still specializes in the former) manage to generate within a couple of decades a distinguished cohort of scholars? How could so sturdy an intellectual life arise on such feeble intellectual traditions?

The answer to this apparent paradox is that evangelicals, in fact, did not build—could not have built—on their own intellectual foundations. Here the curious prominence of Calvin College, alluded to earlier, becomes salient. Calvin is a small institution with a history of having featured on its faculty a surprising number of rather distinguished scholars, especially philosophers and historians. It also, and not coincidentally, has a history of something close to tribalism, though diluted in recent years. Founded in the nineteenth century to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

serve a recent Dutch migration into the Midwest, Calvin has remained closely bound to the children of those immigrants—reading the names on the faculty roster, one could be forgiven for thinking oneself in Amsterdam—and to their fairly small denomination, the Christian Reformed Church. But, though weak in numbers, the C.R.C. is sturdy in mind. It inherited the same rich Calvinist (or capital-R "Reformed") theological traditions and the same predilection for education that made Presbyterianism probably the most intellectually impressive of the larger American churches.

But it inherited them in a distinctive form, in the neo-Calvinism of the Dutch politician and theologian Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920), prime minister of the Netherlands from 1901 to 1905 and earlier the founder of the Free University of Amsterdam. Kuyper rejuvenated John Calvin's beliefs in the devastating effect of Original Sin on the entire human person, including the intellect, and in the power of saving grace, therefore, to enable the elect to see reality more clearly; he likewise repeated Calvin's insistence on the duty of those whom God had saved to glorify God by working to reform his world. In contrast to Catholic thinkers, who tend to emphasize the common rationality of all human beings, Kuyper thus stipulated a sharp opposition between Christian and non-Christian thought. He also stressed (in George Marsden's words) "the importance of the 'mind' of the age in shaping its culture," and he identified "the Christian task as a broad one of transforming all of culture for God's glory."

Roman Catholics of a certain age will be inclined to draw an analogy to the experience of American Catholic intellectuals in the wake of the Second Vatican Council....

Mixed with their hereditary fondness for books and schooling, Kuyperianism made among the Christian Reformed a perfect recipe for cooking up writers and scholars. James Bratt, a historian at Calvin College sometimes associated with the "evangelical" intellectual revival, has written winsomely about the results in his 1984 book *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America* (Books on Demand). From Calvin College itself emerged many of the leaders of the "evangelical" revival: Mouw, Marsden (who qualifies as an honorary Dutchman from his many years on the Calvin faculty), Plantinga, Wolterstorff, and others. Through Calvin College's influence, neo-Calvinism stamped its decisive impress on many of the other leaders, including Hatch and Noll.

The quotation marks now appear around "evangelical" to indicate a certain problem with the term that becomes apparent as soon as one brings in the Calvin College group. As a Calvinist people, the Christian Reformed have a strong doctrine of the church and a deep attachment to creedal traditions. This sets them apart from the American evangelical lineage—with its religious individualism and consequently weak ecclesiology—and its immediate recourse to the Bible alone as the ground of faith. Shared commitments to doctrinal orthodoxy and a mutually held high view of Scripture have sufficed to ensure hearty cooperation between Christian Reformed and "real" evangelical intellectuals—between Calvin College and Wheaton College, to phrase the matter in an institutional synecdoche—and in some contexts even to blur altogether the differences between them. But the fact remains that Kuyperian neo-Calvinism looks very different from most of twentieth-century American evangelicalism.

Kuyperianism hardly exhausts the resources on which the new evangelical intellectuals have drawn. Mark Noll notes that recent evangelical political thinkers have also borrowed "from the Anabaptist heritage, from the mainline Protestantism of Reinhold Niebuhr, or from the neoconservative Catholicism of Richard John Neuhaus, Michael Novak, and George Weigel." Perhaps the favorite writer among bookish evangelicals is C. S. Lewis, an Anglican who rarely had kind words for their version of Protestantism. And, while attention to the Kuyperian tradition maps the main highway in recent evangelical scholarship, for a movement as diverse as American evangelicalism it is not the only road. Recent stirrings at places like Messiah College (Brethren in Christ), Pepperdine University (Churches of Christ), Baylor University (Southern Baptist), and several Wesleyan, Holiness, and Pentecostal institutions show that renewed concern about intellectual life does not derive only from the Reformed. Such eclecticism helps to explain the suppleness and adaptability of recent evangelical intellectual life. From my viewpoint, however, the decisive influence on the revival remains neo-Calvinism.

Whether this judgment is correct or not, the success of these evangelicals in finding resources outside of their own tradition, in order to enliven the life of the mind within it, is not only one of the more fascinating and impressive episodes in recent intellectual history, it also raises a curious question. To what extent can the evangelical intellectual revival properly be called evangelical? The distinctives of evangelicalism seem to survive more in religious than in intellectual behavior: the new evangelical intellectuals pray as evangelicals but think as Calvinists or Anglicans, or sometimes even Catholics.

Whether the evangelical intellectual revival will make serious inroads into the broad culture of American evangelicalism remains to be seen. Even many evangelical intellectuals remain skeptical about this. That it has made, and will continue to make, a substantial mark on American academic life seems indisputable, especially in history, philosophy, and more recently sociology. But the overall effect will likely be to fortify other, nonevangelical Christian approaches to scholarship, rather than to generate an original, distinctively evangelical life of the mind. □

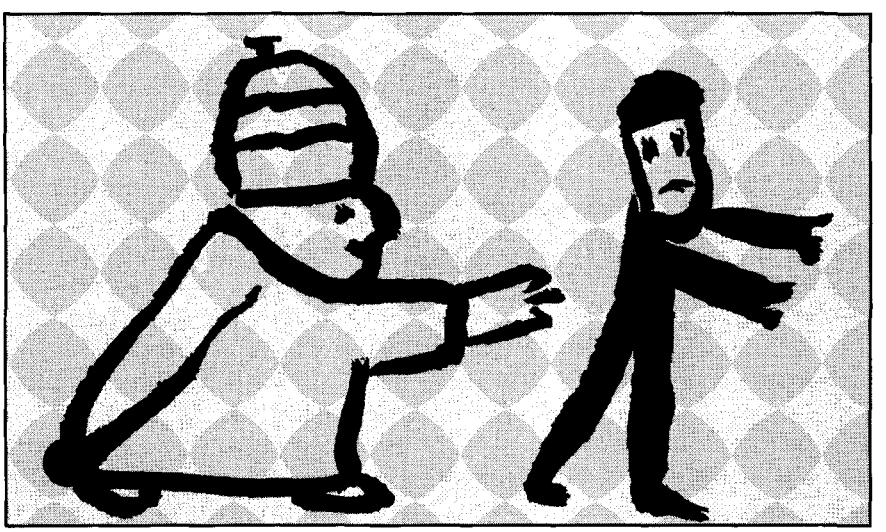
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Christian unity & the papacy

Jerry Ryan

Gregory I (pope from 590–604), in a letter to the patriarch of Alexandria, addresses him as his "brother in rank," refuses to be considered "universal pope," and rejects any titles that might "inflate vanity and offend charity." Gregory VII (1073–85), in the text known as *Dictatus papae*, affirms that "only the Roman pontiff can be called universal, use the imperial standards, and allow princes to kiss his feet." At the conclusion of Vatican I (1869–70), when the Greek Catholic patriarch of Antioch, Gregory II Youssef, advanced to kiss the feet of Pius IX, the pope pushed his foot on the patriarch's neck and called him, in substance, a "stubborn mule." During the debates in the council the patriarch had protested that the proposed definitions of papal infallibility were not conformed to tradition—thus provoking the famous response of Pius IX: "I am the tradition!"



In his 1995 encyclical *Ut unum sint*, John Paul II states that he wishes to heed "the request made of me to find a way of exercising the primacy which, while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission, is none the less open to a new situation." He acknowledges that "for a variety of reasons and against the will of all concerned, what should have been a service sometimes manifested itself in a very different light. I insistently pray the Holy Spirit to shine his light upon us, enlightening all the pastors and theologians of our churches so that we may seek—together, of course—the forms in which this ministry may accomplish a service of love recognized by all concerned."

Let me suggest that those "forms" are already known to us, for they were practiced for much of Christianity's first thousand years. Indeed, the three instances cited in my opening paragraph can be seen to represent three manners of exercising the primacy. "For a whole millennium Christians were united in a brotherly fraternal communion of faith and sacramental life. If disagreements in belief and discipline arose among them, the Roman See acted by common consent as moderator" (*Ut unum sint*).

It is an undisputed fact that, after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the church of Rome inherited the role of "mother church." Even before the close of the first century, Ignatius of Antioch wrote to the "church in Rome which presides in love." The relationship between Rome and the rest of the Christian world in the first millennium was not always idyllic nor tension-free, but Rome was considered, at least implicitly, as the instrument and sign of ecclesial unity. In the ecumenical councils, the interventions of the bishop of Rome were given special consideration, the arbitration of Rome was sought and respected. However, Rome did not preside "infallibly," at least not in the sense that popes were incapable of error. For example, the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople III, 680–81) condemned, with the approbation of then Pope Agathon, certain of the Christological positions of Pope Honorius (625–38) as well as those of the late patriarch of Constantinople.

Obviously, the emergence of the papacy as a temporal power brought about a radical change in the way Rome conceived of and exercised its primacy. However justified this assumption of temporal power might be as a "suppliance" in an epoch of chaos and division in the Western world and as a guarantee of the political independence of the papacy, it could not but affect the idea Rome had of its spiritual role. In his famous bull *Unam sanctam* (1302), Boniface VIII affirms the absolute temporal power of the pope, his right to judge

Jerry Ryan *writes from Chelsea, Massachusetts.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all other temporal powers and not to be judged by any other. The pope is not just the vicar of Christ; he is his substitute. The bull concludes: "We affirm, declare, and decree that it is absolutely necessary to submit to the Roman pontiff in order to be saved."

The Reformation signaled the decline of the papacy's temporal power, culminating in the humiliation of Pius VI by Napoleon and the plebiscite of 1870, in which the people of Rome, by an overwhelming majority, voted for their incorporation into the new secular Kingdom of Italy. As if to compensate for the loss of political power, the popes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began to accentuate their spiritual authority. Following Vatican I and its declaration of papal infallibility, *Civiltà Cattolica*, the review of the Roman Jesuits, serenely declared that "when the pope meditates, it is God who is thinking in him." Don Bosco could affirm, in a text which received the imprimatur, that "Jesus put the pope on the same level as God."

As if to compensate for the loss of political power, the popes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began to accentuate their spiritual authority. Following Vatican I and its declaration of papal infallibility, Civiltà Cattolica, the review of the Roman Jesuits, serenely declared that "when the pope meditates, it is God who is thinking in him.

By focusing its ecclesiology on fraternal communion, Vatican II (1962–65) has provided the elements necessary for returning the Christian church to its most venerable traditions. The mystery of the church is realized in the communion of the people of God, a people who has found mercy: "As Christ realized the redemption in poverty and persecution, so is the church called to follow this same road to communicate the fruits of salvation to mankind," the council wrote in its *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*. "The ministries in the church are at the service of the people of God that all might rejoice in their true Christian dignity and freely attain salvation."

More than thirty years have elapsed since Vatican II, but the consequences of this teaching have yet to permeate the church. It is no easy task to reverse the drift toward papal authoritarianism built up in the course of a millennium. While all sorts of historical, political, and social reasons can be advanced to explain how, as John Paul noted, "what should have been a service sometimes manifested itself in a very different light," there has been a concomitant effort, unconscious perhaps, to justify these deviations by exaggerating certain elements of ecclesiology. In the measure in which the papacy assumed temporal power, it began to see its mission as manifesting the kingship of the triumphant Christ and itself as a sacrament of this kingship. Pushed too far, such a monarchical vision of ecclesial authority has threatened to place the papacy beyond the reach of history itself and individual popes outside the human condition.

Nor has such a mentality been limited to the papacy: it is manifested in the Roman curia in the measure in which it claims to represent a directly inspired papal authority, in the episcopacy insofar as it presumes to possess the truth independently of the faithful. To be sure, the ordained receive a grace of special assistance of the Holy Spirit, but this does not exempt them from the human effort of listening, learning, and searching; if anything, the grace of the sacrament obliges the ordained to *search* the will of God with more diligence and discretion.

Gregory the Great appropriated the magnificent title of "servant of the servants of God." Paul VI was fond of using the same title, and certain of his acts manifested how seriously he took it. John Paul II desires that the papal primacy be at the service of church unity. For this to come about it is crucial that the primacy, all primacy, become a *service* rather than a prerogative, privilege, or power. It is true that "the church is not a democracy," that it has a divinely instituted hierarchical structure. But it is also true that the church is essentially a communion of persons in the Trinitarian life and that this communion cannot be imposed from without. It must surge from within, in freedom and love and in the Holy Spirit. The role of the hierarchy is to provoke, nurture, and promote this communion. Communion cannot be realized without a "reception," a seeking out of the "*sensus fidelium*."

Communion also implies a unity in diversity very different from the uniformity that too often has been exacted in the past. Lip service is given to the respect due to local churches and customs but, in practice, Rome continues to impose its views (for example, in the current impasse over juridical control of American Catholic universities). Yet there is a growing recognition that, in the apostolic tradition, the local church fully manifests the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church; that it is not just a "part" of the universal church but the plentitude of that church in a given place and assembled around its bishop.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is no easy answer to the question of how to reunite the Christian churches under the papacy. Still, there seems to be a growing consensus that a starting point would be to return to the situation that existed before the Great Schism of 1054. *Ut unum sint* invokes the church of the first millennium and the role of the Roman See as moderator, by common accord, in cases of disagreement. A return to such simplicity is not inconceivable. It would require, however, rethinking and recasting a thousand years of historical baggage. For one thing, it would mean recognizing that all the councils since the rupture between East and West were not truly ecumenical, but simple synods of the Western church, and thus not universally binding. Paul VI opened the door to such a possibility when, in the solemn commemoration of the seven-hundredth anniversary of the Council of Lyon, recognized by Rome as the fourteenth of the ecumenical councils, he constantly referred to it as the sixth general synod of the Western church. Reunification would require a purification of habits and memories, a shift from a juridical conception of papal authority to a "sacramental" understanding of the papacy as an efficacious sign of church unity recognized and empowered by a common accord.

The sacramental dimension of the primacy cannot be imposed; its authority must be founded on the authority of the truth and not, as has been the case in the past, on the truth of its authority. This is exactly the note that John Paul II hits in *Ut unum sint* when he asks all the pastors and theologians of our churches to seek together with him the forms in which the ministry of Peter may accomplish a service of love *recognized by all*. There is here a confidence that the truth, humbly and prayerfully sought by all concerned, will eventually manifest and impose itself.

Such a willingness to recognize the works of the Holy Spirit in the separated churches and to learn and be enriched by them is already a powerful work of unification. It is Peter *affirming* his brethren and not lording it over them. It would not be contrary to the essential mission of the primacy, for instance, to recognize the jurisdictional autonomy of the Eastern churches and the originality of their traditions. The bishop of Rome would continue to be the patriarch of the West, exercising immediate jurisdiction according to Western customs and only intervening outside of this jurisdiction as a moderator when there are "disagreements in belief and discipline." Perhaps a similar rapport could be established with the Reformed churches, whereby their structures, traditions, and charisms would be respected while enriching them with the graces of communion with the universal church.

Of course, an unwillingness to pursue seriously the possibility of unity is not the failure of Rome alone. Far from it. It is no secret that there has been a resurgence of conservatism and parochialism in many of the Christian churches. But whatever might be the difficulties, it is asked of the Christian churches to *tend towards* an ideal of unity. This ideal may seem utopian, but that should not deter us. □

Very

Psalm 4

Look at this!
A circle dance
Around a bonfire
That won't stop,
They swear,
Until rain falls.
If dance can make rain fall,
Tears might make rain.
If they could see
What fools they are,
Their wheatfields might
Be watered, and wine flow.
But no.
I sleep.
You bring the clouds.

Just Below

Psalm 8

Although we cannot say your name
Aloud, both earth and sky
Hang moving pictures of your present,
Giving children speech and strength
To quiet even angry strangers.
When I look at the sky, the night sky
Moonlit, starred with patterns
That go past me, I wonder
What we are, that you take notice?
Or our children, who can sing
Songs we've forgotten? We stand
Just below angels, who see glory,
Honor as we do those fields, trees,
Mountains, chasms, rivers, oceans
You have given us sway over:
Grazing herds and feral stalkers,
Creatures of the house and barnyard,
Songbirds, shore birds, fish, whatever
Swims or sails through the deep.
Yet all these goods spread out
Before us, for generations,
Do not begin to sound one syllable
Of what the whole earth knows
Best left unsaid.

Laurance Wieder

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Celia Wren

MINIMAL EFFECTS

"Anna Karenina' & 'Moses, My Love"

If insomnia were a room, what would it look like? What color would the walls be? What would the furniture look like—and the other people? Because you wouldn't be alone there: individuals would constantly flit in and out—co-workers, acquaintances, friends, reenacting scenes you have remembered or imagined over and over again, the ghosts of an overactive mind.

On their recent trip to the United States, the innovative British troupe Shared Experience turned the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Majestic Theater into such a mind, peopling the stage with characters who seemed real but distanced, as if filtered through recollection and sleeplessness. And, oh yes—these dreamlike figures were locked in the passions of Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*.

The artists of Shared Experience are old hands at staging hefty novels, including *The Mill on the Floss* and *War and Peace*. In *Anna Karenina* (adapted from Tolstoy's text by Helen Edmundson), they spun out a mesmerizing, streamlined version of the book's complex plot, using stylized movements that tipped the scenes into the surreal. When Anna and Vronsky (actors Teresa Banham and Derek Riddell) first made love, they entwined their limbs in exaggerated, robotic gestures that repeated cyclically, as if a hex had imprisoned the pair inside a modern dance sequence. Later, as Anna sank deeper into unhappiness, she played tug-of-war with a silent, hooded figure who had haunted the play throughout. At moments like these, it almost seemed as if the story's tragedy and social maneuvering had taken place before, perhaps many times. The normal laws of cause and effect had been suspended; we are trapped inside a recurrent memory—or perhaps inside an artist's obsessive imagination.

As directed by Nancy Meckler, *Anna Karenina* seemed too dispassionate to some New York theatergoers. Certainly some of the production's most astonishing moments appeared to ask the audience for recognition, rather than emotion. Early on, in a sequence expressing her efforts to stifle her guilty love, Anna marched to a curved red wall at the back of the stage and pushed it until it slid, obscuring the silhouette of Vronsky, who had been standing to one side; simultaneously, the silhouette of her husband popped out on the other end. Probably everyone sitting in the steeply raked auditorium could remember what it felt like to thrust away an uncomfortable thought or painful memory with such deliberate, and futile, resolve.

Throughout, in fact, the production demanded that the audience connect with it, sit up and think, rather than sit back and allow an illusion to unfold. There was precious little illusion, in any case: Shared Experience recreated nineteenth-century Russia without the aid of sets or props, apart from two suitcases, a few chairs, and the dull-red wall and stage floor.

The minimalist design (by Lucy Weller) forced viewers to make an imaginative investment in the experience. At one point, for example, in a scene expressing the idealistic landowner Levin's ardent relationship with farming (the subject, readers may remember, of some of the novel's more tedious passages), the actor playing Levin (Richard Hope) opened a suitcase that turned out to contain grain, which he proceeded to churn with a large shovel. Instead of simply following Levin's agricultural innovations, as a reader of the novel does, one found oneself analyzing an image—drawing a parallel between the suitcase's bizarre contents and the incongruities that surface in dreams, or the strange associations that may derail a train of thought. Had the stage been less bare to begin with, the image might not have invited such reflection—*Anna Karenina*'s thrifty aesthetic was calculated to advance the company's mission, described in the program as fostering "the unique collaboration between actor and audience."

Around the same time, in another part of New York City, an even more spartan stage design was involving theatergoers in the dynamics of a very different play. The odds might have

"It does not suggest Anna Karenina."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seemed to be against the audacious composer/lyricist Paul Dick when *Moses, My Love*, his sung-through dramatization of the story of Moses, opened at the Judith Anderson Theater, only a few hundred yards away from a block-long billboard for the new DreamWorks animated feature film *The Prince of Egypt*. How could a musical with a rock-bottom budget compete with animated splendor bankrolled by Steven Spielberg and friends?

As it turned out, the play had no trouble holding its own ground. Tuneful, dignified, and surprisingly hip, *Moses, My Love* showcased a cast of first-rate performers whose services, the program announced, had been proffered free of charge, presumably out of love for the material. Dick, whose adventurous projects have included musical versions of *Wuthering Heights* and *Madame Bovary*, had stoked his biblical adaptation with engaging melodies and lyrics appealingly balanced between the solemn and the colloquial ("That nut and his loony brother again!" one of Pharaoh's guards complained when Moses and Aaron put in an appearance at court).

As directed by Marc Geller, *Moses, My Love* was almost more of a cantata than a play, with narrative scenes like the miracle of the burning bush (represented—with truly stylish understatement—by a spotlight fixed on a trash can) giving way to more expansive, meditative numbers. Andrew Cavanaugh Holland's bare-bones set consisted of little more than two metal scaffolds, onto which the cast occasionally climbed, as when Miriam (Rachel Gottlieb) spied on Pharaoh's daughter (Lauren Wales) during the latter's discovery of the infant Moses.

Simple costumes, and a modicum of stage business, did keep the performance grounded in theater. But the visual simplicity emphasized the difference between *Moses, My Love* and most other plays: instead of telling a story, the pared-down spectacle aimed to celebrate one—and the project required the participation of an audience versed in the Judeo-Christian tradition. (Individuals coming to the story for the first time would have had a hard time interpreting the trash can.) The music and simplified tableaus were incomplete on their own; it was the audience's job to flesh out the details, place the narrative in a meaningful context, summon the associations, metaphors, and morals that made the story of Moses an epic worth singing about.

Will *The Prince of Egypt* allow viewers to be active co-creators of an experience in this way? If the block-long billboard is anything to go by, the movie will be too busy, crammed with bright colors and attractive shapes and exhilarating movement. Sometimes less is more—in theater, less can be a lot more. "Our stage," the influential Swiss designer Adolphe Appia wrote, "is a vista into the unknown...space for which our souls long in order that our imagination can be submerged in it." The less clutter—not just the physical kind—the better the vista. Too many distractions may make it impossible to see the mind in a grain-filled suitcase, or a miracle in a trash can. □

New from Ave Maria Press

Where Joy & Sorrow Meet
A Way of the Cross
Nicholas Ayo, James Flanigan, Joseph Ross, J. Massyngbaerde Ford
If you would be my disciple, said Jesus, *Take up your cross and follow me.* This is the call that comes to believers; this is the heart of the Christian life. No spiritual practice answers this call as concretely as the ancient devotion of the Stations of the Cross. Each of the fifteen stations is addressed in a separate chapter, through meditation, art, poetry, and prayer. As they make their way from one station to the next, readers will feel the kinship with those who have gone before. At the same time, they must be ready for the way in which this vivid encounter with Jesus will touch their own lives.
ISBN: 0-87793-668-4 / **184 pages, $12.95**

The Promise of Virtue
Eugene F. Hemrick
"How do we make good on the one and only life we have to live? Fr. Eugene Hemrick's description of the seven virtues needed in the Church today will help all of us come to a deeper understanding of what it takes to live "the good life" of discipleship as we face the challenge of bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ into the new millennium."
—His Eminence, Cardinal Roger Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles
ISBN: 0-87793-671-4 / **160 pages, $12.95**

Available from your local religious bookstore or:
ave maria press
P.O. Box 428 ~ Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-0428
Ph: 1-800-282-1865, Ext. 1 ~ FAX: 1-800-282-5681
In Canada: Order from your local bookstore or B. Broughton Co., Ltd., 2105 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON M4C 1K1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Something lost, something gained?

The Dying of the Light
The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from Their Christian Churches
James Tunstead Burtchaell
William B. Eerdmans, $30, 868 pp.

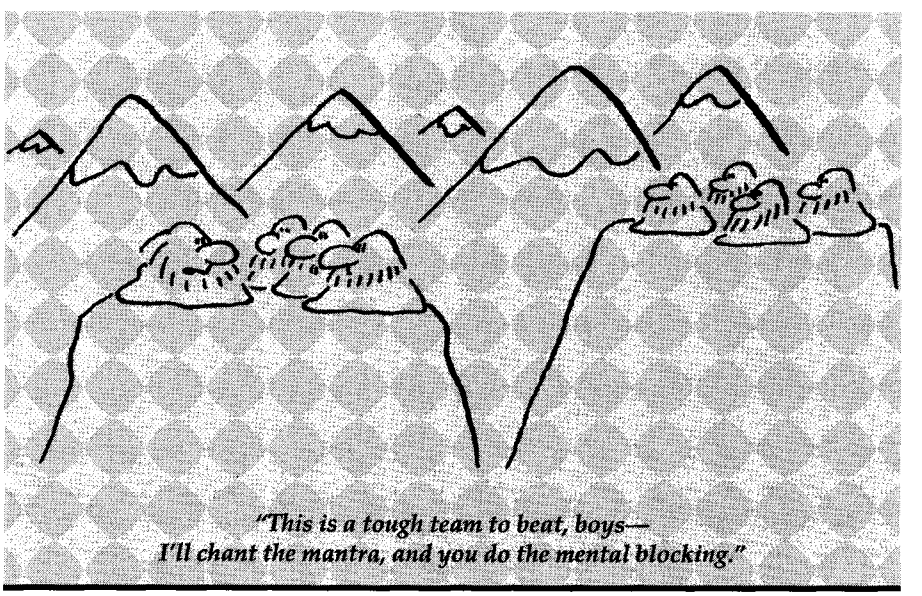
Neil Coughlan

Countless colleges and universities in the history of the United States were founded under some sort of Christian patronage," James Burtchaell begins, "but many which still survive do not claim any relationship with a church or denomination. Even on most of the campuses which are still listed by churches as their affiliates, there is usually some concern expressed today about how authentic or how enduring that tie really is, and often wistful concern is all that remains."

Congregational (Dartmouth, Beloit), Presbyterian (Lafayette, Davidson), Methodist (Millsaps, Ohio Wesleyan), Baptist, Lutheran, Catholic (Boston College, New Rochelle, Saint Mary's of California), Evangelical—Burtchaell tells their stories, college by college. They are enthralling—Burtchaell cannot write a dull page—and vastly different from each other. Finally, though, he argues, the stories are the same. Each college had been founded with two purposes, to foster the students' piety in their church's faith and their morality, and to educate them. In the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, most of the Protestant colleges became increasingly independent of their founding churches, their presidents less likely to be ministers, more likely to see themselves exclusively as educators, educators in secular learning (theology never really had a place in these colleges or was soon sent off to seminaries and independent schools of divinity). Slowly, and then more quickly, members of other faiths were admitted to the student body and to the faculty. The teaching of defining religious dogma became an embarrassment, as did distinctive moral doctrines (abstinence from alcohol, from dancing, from *eros*). The piety, separated from the intellectual life of the colleges, was pushed over into the chapel, and chapel became optional. Morals gradually became manners and "social outreach." In the end, colleges became nominally Baptist, or nominally Lutheran, or secular. (Of the Protestants, only some of the evangelicals have not succumbed yet.)

And the Catholics? Burtchaell is a Holy Cross priest and, although he spends less than a quarter of the book on the Catholic situation, his particular interest in it is apparent. As late as the early 1960s, Burtchaell reminds us, Catholic colleges and universities required their students (almost all of them Catholics) both to take a set of courses in their religious faith (the life of Christ, the sacraments, etc.) and to complete two "majors," one in the student's chosen field (history, mathematics, whatever) and the other in philosophy. This philosophy major was an entirely prescribed curriculum of eight or ten courses in neoscholasticism. It presented a complete philosophical system, its logic, epistemology, psychology, cosmology, natural theology, metaphysics, and ethics. The system comported with and buttressed Catholic belief. The message to the students: in the religion classes and the philosophy major we have taught you the basic truths about God, the human condition, and the world; there is no conflict between reason and faith. Go forth; fear nothing.

This arrangement had its problems, however. Staffing the religion and philosophy curriculums had always been difficult. The priests and religious who were induced (or assigned) to teach them typically did not have the scholarly graduate education or aptitude for effective



"This is a tough team to beat, boys—
I'll chant the mantra, and you do the mental blocking."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

college teaching of theology or philosophy. In their hands the curriculums commonly became a protracted, amateurish dosing in Catholic apologetics, boring most of the students, infuriating the *engagés*. In the 1960s, this way of doing things—cloistered and dated—collapsed. At Boston College, for instance, the philosophy requirement was reduced in 1964 from ten courses (twenty-eight credits) to five. By 1971 it was down to two. The theology requirement was reduced from four courses to three to two. The courses themselves, in many schools, began to come as a smorgasbord (pick two, any two). And no longer were they necessarily in Catholic theology, or "Catholic" philosophy.

But what of the students? Had not the prescribed curriculums in neoscholastic philosophy and Catholicism, however poorly taught, been "the integrative finale" of a Catholic college education? What would fill that need now? We students and liberal faculty had our answers. The pervasive "Catholic atmosphere" of the colleges, the self-confidence of our march out of our precincts into American national life, these would foster Catholic faith and intellectualism as effectively as ever did a drilling in apologetics and the Catholic catechism. The world itself, we rather suddenly saw, was not an ungodly other—Christ's sacrifice had saved it, too. It was instinct with grace. Incarnationalism, we called it. Manicheanism was the philosophy of the ghetto. Everything would work out just fine.

Would it? The 1960s and '70s brought a dam-burst of other changes, too, and Burtchaell shows that the Catholics in those few years reenacted pell mell the earlier histories of the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, and the rest. Presidents of Catholic colleges and universities came to function less as members of their religious communities running church colleges and more as executives in American higher education. The student bodies went from 95 percent Catholic, to 80 percent, to 70 percent. The departments of English, biology, etc., became full members of their national academic guilds: When they hired, they hired the best biologist, no longer the best Catholic biologist. More and more noncollegiate but lucrative vocational curriculums and schools (business, nursing...) were brought on campus. The terms of governmental funding, ever more important, suggested it was perilous for a school to be too Catholic.

Eventually, the question occurred: Exactly how is this college Catholic now? The philosophical heart had been taken out of the curriculum; we no longer systematically educated the Catholic students in their faith; the academic departments pursued value-free inquiry as at any other college; less and less did we pray or worship together; every year fewer of the faculty and students were Catholic....How are we Catholic? *Are* we Catholic?

As Burtchaell tells it, Catholic college leaders, still largely clerics, did not often give their own question a straight answer. They papered over radical change with a rhetoric of continuity—really, a rhetoric of fantasy. In a 1994 document, *Jesuits and Boston College: Six Propositions for a Conversation*, the Jesuits ask the right question:

> Some would say that [the colleges founded by the Jesuits] have adapted too thoroughly to the standards of secular academic life...In the 1990s, the argument would go, these institutions offer upper-middle-class students a vaguely liberal education colored by a rhetoric of spiritual values....Particularly in graduate programs and in the research agendas of faculty, these institutions take most of their values from mainstream American academic life, offer curriculums not notably different from what is available elsewhere, and work to advance the same kinds of knowledge as do secular institutions.

Their answer is not as forthright:

> Unlike religious traditions that have distrusted or fled the world, Ignatian [Jesuit] spirituality sees the world of nature and culture in and around us as graced at its core by God's self-giving, therefore worth our work and our study. This point of view discloses God to the discerning eye and discloses God drawing all that is of our world and all that is human into God's own life. Our very yearning for fulfillment directs our search Godwards and will be satisfied only in the possession of God for which we have been made.

What do these words mean, exactly? Really only this—we Jesuits see God lurking behind nature and society. Therefore, it is good to study them. Burtchaell, I think, would say, *everyone* considers it good to study nature and society—but you Jesuits claim something else, too. You claim you see God here. Yet, you don't say a word about programmatically teaching the student body how to see God through their studies. How is B.C., then, different from N.Y.U., which also has some hundreds of Catholics on the faculty (discerning God lurking)? Is not Boston College really a secular university with a (declining) Jesuit presence? And won't most of its Catholic graduates have at best a rudimentary notion of Catholic dogma and doctrine? Will they ever have seen Catholicism or theology as a subject of serious academic study? Will the idea that their faith can inform and advance their intellectual lives be foreign to them?

What is to be done? In *The Fading of the Light* Burtchaell holds back. His book, he says, has not been written to provide instruction on how to avoid the mistakes of the past, "so clearly patterned,...so lethally repeated." "Anyone who requires further imagination to recognize and remedy them is not up to the task of trying again, and better." This is too coy. Burtchaell, however, has been more forthcoming elsewhere, in *First Things* (April and May 1991). His prescription is along the following lines:

1. New Catholic colleges/universities must be founded or existing ones profoundly redirected.

2. Most (90 percent) of the students must be Catholics; applicants must be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

told they are coming to a thoroughly Catholic college.

3. Most faculty must be Catholic; all departments must seek out and prefer faculty who are active Catholics (do not dismiss this—would David O'Brien's work as a historian be half so interesting if he had not had his career at Holy Cross College?).

4. All students must complete a substantial curriculum of Catholic theology, taught for the most part by Catholic theologians (Burtchaell does not argue for neoscholasticism and 1950s Catholic "religion" courses; his point is that we threw out bath and baby just as a generation of Catholic clergy and theologians was being educated in the sophisticated historical study of Scripture and tradition, the dogmatic and speculative theology that flowered in the church after the 1943 encyclical *Divino afflante spiritu*; these people, he says, could have revitalized theology in the colleges, made it a center of "broad spectrum, scholarly, and critical discourse").

5. These colleges must have vigorously supported liturgical and praying lives.

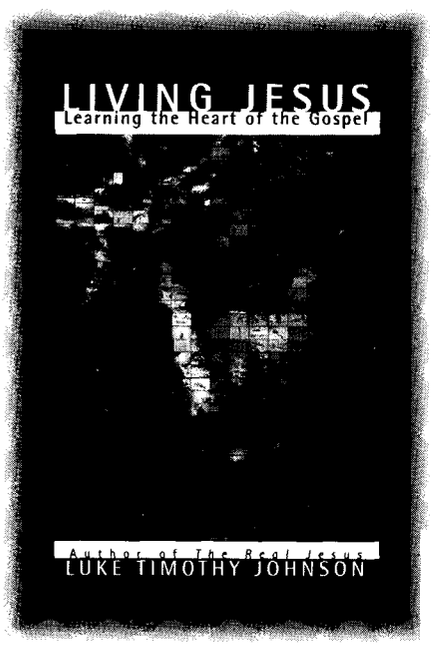
6. And finally, they must be reintegrated into the church, be part of the sacramental community and apostolic mission of the dioceses and Rome (this would serve, *inter alia*, to foster conservative Catholic theology—though Burtchaell is wary of fools and ham-fists both to the left and the right).

If this is Burtchaell's remedy for the dying of the light—and I have little doubt that it is—it is radical, particularly, perhaps, in its last point: most American Catholic colleges and universities now are independent entities; Burtchaell wants them brought under episcopal authority. A radical solution sometimes is a sign that the problem has been overstated. There are serious people, who, while seeing many of the failures Burtchaell does, see them as events along the way, not calls for a whole new beginning. I wonder, for instance, what Burtchaell thinks of the University of Notre Dame, run by his own Congregation of Holy Cross, and where he once taught. The student body at Notre Dame is roughly 80 percent Roman Catholic. The faculty, 60 percent—"affirmative action" for Catholics is the rule. The university has made a major commitment to Catholic theology: the department has forty members, all with doctorates in theology (though the department is predominately Catholic, Protestant and Jewish scholars are hired for their specialties and perspectives). All students must take two courses in theology, the first a foundation in biblical studies and patristics, the second an elective "theme" course. There is a similar two-course progression in philosophy required of all students. The university makes every effort to "Catholicize" the campus; more than half the student body regularly attend Sunday Mass.

Would this please Burtchaell? I don't think so. He wants a college or a university that is first an organ of the Catholic church and only then an affiliate of American higher education. He wants economics professors who ask as a matter of course "what insightful element of perfection [does Catholic faith bring] to the practice and critique of economics?" He wants a faculty peopled by "learned and articulate believers who [are] not only open to all truth, but possessed of advantages in approaching all truth: graced master insights, an interpretive community, and an authentic tradition." This language is more visionary than expository. Also, it is covertly more sectarian than it appears. Rather than try to tease out its meaning, I would ask a blunt question: Who would go to these colleges and universities? What students (and parents) would pass up Yale or Pomona or Notre Dame to attend the Catholic college/university of the diocese of Norwich, Connecticut, or Houston, Texas? What Catholic historians and biologists would choose to teach there? Would such schools become centers of excellence, or only backwaters, curious reminders of a conservative critique of the 1990s American Catholic church and of some aggressively secularizing forces in American society? □

Neil Coughlan *is a lawyer and the author of* Young John Dewey.

The Heart of the Gospel



Luke Timothy Johnson, author of the controversial *The Real Jesus*, explores the true legacy of the "living" Jesus by arguing that the Jesus of authentic Christian faith is fully experienced through the lifelong process of what he calls "learning Jesus."

"*Living Jesus* nourishes an authentic Christian spirituality. . . ."
—L. Gregory Jones, dean, Duke University Divinity School

HarperSanFrancisco
A Division of HarperCollins*Publishers*
http://www.harpercollins.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NAMING NAMES

I Married a Communist
Philip Roth
Houghton, Mifflin, $26, 323 pp.

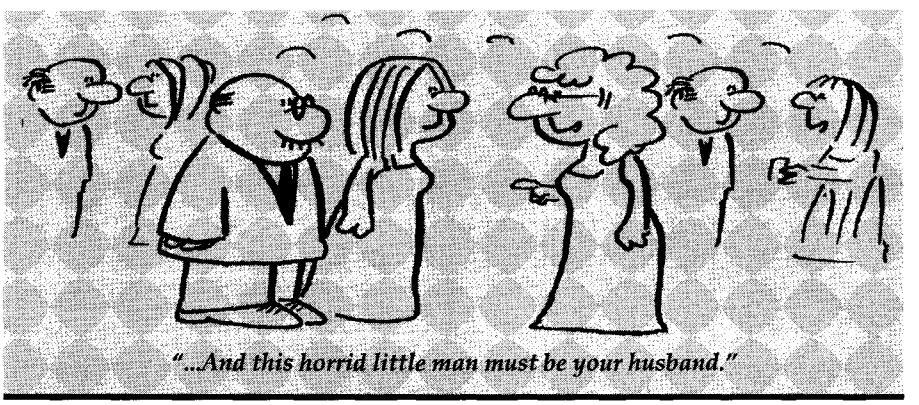
Rachel M. Brownstein

Nathan Zuckerman sits in the dark on the deck of his house in the woods, claiming to be played out. "I've had my story," he says. If you've read any of the books that feature Philip Roth's alter ego, you'll call this an understatement; you may also recall that, big talker though he is, Zuckerman has a knack for making another guy's story his.

The voice of his ninety-year-old former English teacher, Murray Ringold, is what brings back the past to Zuckerman in Roth's latest novel. Talking on the deck, the two men share memories of the years after World War II, when Americans were still listening in the dark to patriotic programs on the radio—the decade when America began to be torn apart by the righteous rhetoric that had helped it win the war. History as Zuckerman-Roth conceives it begins as usual in Newark, New Jersey, where in 1946 he was an idealistic high school student and Murray an inspiring teacher, "altogether natural in his manner...while in his speech verbally copious and intellectually almost menacing." Nathan admired "the vocation of a male high school teacher like Murray Ringold, who wasn't lost in the amorphous American aspiration to make it big," but Murray's simpler brother Ira—who did make it big, as the radio star Iron Rinn—was the man who became his hero.

As in *American Pastoral*, Roth's 1997 novel about the violent intersection of political and private life in the sixties, the figure at the center of this story is a giant of a man, so nonverbal and spontaneous, so altogether un-Zuckerman-like, that even though he hails from Jewish Newark he can pass for a real American—which helps do him in. Ira-Iron is a Lincoln look-alike, unironic and pathologically irate. "Back in that era, there were a lot of angry Jewish guys around like Ira," Murray recalls. "That's one of the biggest things that America gave to the Jews—gave them their anger....Especially after the war." Ira is converted to communism during the war by his army buddy Johnny O'Day.

Like "The Swede" in *American Pastoral*, Ira eludes Roth, for all that the young Zuckerman admired him. (Is one impulse behind these books Zuckerman-Roth's attempt to figure out how come he looked up to those guys in high school?) And Murray lacks the hopped-up energy of The Swede's smarter brother, who helps make *American Pastoral* a more brilliant book. "Ira smelled like sap," Murray remembers; Nathan learns the extent to which Ira was a sap, greedy, credulous, indeed criminal. Iron Rinn marries the genteel and would-be Gentile actress Eve Frame, whom he uses as a front; he puts up with her perverse bond to her fat daughter; he betrays Eve, and she retaliates. But in spite of their flamboyance, Ira and Eve remain distant characters; Murray's and Nathan's rich ruminations on the human propensity for betrayal and revenge are more compelling.



"...And this horrid little man must be your husband."

Roth can still serve up succulent details, and readers of a certain age especially will resonate to evocations of the daily life of fifty years ago, when women "had to be fit to lean from their open back windows while rooted to the floor of the apartment and, whatever the temperature—up there like seamen at work in the rigging—to hang the wet clothes out on the clothesline, to peg them with the clothespins an item at a time, feeding the line out until all the waterlogged family wash was hung and the line was full and flapping in the air of industrial Newark." *I Married a Communist* is a historical novel, doubly driven by Murray's memory and Zuckerman's, the pressure of the past and the urgent need to recall. By telling a story rooted in a certain time and place and political atmosphere, it opens the question of fiction's truth to history. Roth seems to have a melancholy, mainstream view of the plight of idealism in postwar America, seeing good men defeated and flawed ones deluded as things go from bad to worse in Newark and in general.

It is as an autobiographical work that *I Married a Communist* poses its most pointed questions about truth to (personal) history. The novel's title is also the title of the tell-all memoir about Iron Rinn that Eve writes—rather, has written for her, by a couple of Red-hunters who seek (just as Ira does) to use celebrity for political purposes. Roth's reader cannot but hear the phrase as archly or parodically confessional—as "I Married a Memoirist," perhaps, or "I Married a Novelist," which is what he probably thinks his actress-ex-wife's memoir (*Leaving a Doll's House* by Claire Bloom) should have been called. The joke isn't too bad, but the taste is: Roth nails fiction to fact with a sure aim that makes one wince. The larger problem is that,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as Roth makes sure we know he knows, celebrity and notoriety drive out all kinds of truth. Eve's betrayal of Ira with the help of the mandarin gossips Katrina Van Tassel and Bryden Grant is paralleled by young Nathan Zuckerman's betrayal of himself: at a party, he asks Katrina for her autograph, compelled in spite of his disdain for her by the glamour of celebrity and power. The scene is ambiguously moving because we know celebrity is in the cards for Zuckerman-Roth himself.

Signing names, changing names, naming names—Katrina's and Eve's and Senator Joseph McCarthy's power, in the fifties, and Roth's and other people's today—are what this book is all about. The subject is great and manifold, and Roth is the man to mine it. Of McCarthy he writes shrewdly that "he understood the entertainment value of disgrace and how to feed the pleasures of paranoia. He took us back to our origins, back to the seventeenth century and the stocks. That's how the country began: moral disgrace as public entertainment." One takes the prescient point: that's where the country is now, with grave consequences for both politics and culture.

But naming names is also the tactic of the writer who wants to sort things out and understand them. Toward the end of this novel, an exuberant riff on Nixon's televised funeral names names so as to list our national disgraces: "Gerald Ford. I don't ever remember Gerald Ford looking so focused before, so charged with intelligence as he clearly was on that hallowed ground. Ronald Reagan snapping the uniformed honor guard his famous salute, that salute of his that was *always* half meshugeh. Bob Hope seated next to James Baker...." Is this fiction? Journalism? History? Memoir? Political analysis? Theater review or exposé? Or is there only one encompassing genre now, for a master chronicler of the American twentieth century, and himself in it? □

Rachel M. Brownstein *is a professor of English at Brooklyn College and at the Graduate School of the City University of New York, where she runs the Liberal Studies Program.*

HE WILL BE MISSED

Sabbatical Journey
Henry Nouwen
Crossroad, $19.95, 226 pp.

Bill Williams

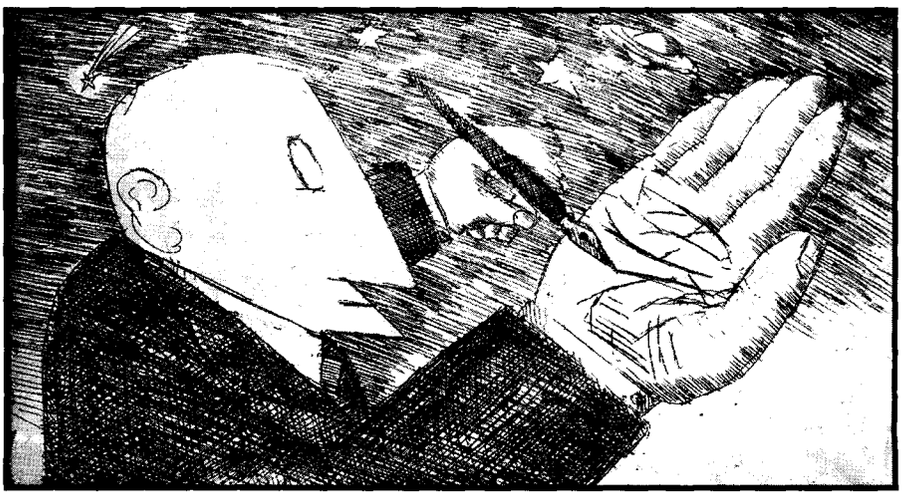
Henry Nouwen was regarded by some as one of the finest spiritual writers of our time. His sudden death in 1996 left his many readers and friends bereft. Nouwen was, of course, famously prolific, so it comes as no surprise that new books by him continue to be published posthumously. *Sabbatical Journey* is must reading for Nouwen fans and a fine introduction to the man for the uninitiated.

With the encouragement of his friends in the L'Arche Daybreak community in Toronto, Nouwen took a one-year sabbatical to write and reflect. *Sabbatical Journey* is the journal account he kept during that break, from September 2, 1995, until August 30, 1996. Three weeks after completing the sabbatical, he died of heart failure at age sixty-four.

Nouwen began his year off with mixed feelings. "Addicted to being busy," he wondered if he could let go of his pastoral and social entanglements. The tension between his need to be with friends and his desire for quiet persisted. Again and again he writes of his emotional vulnerability and insatiable need for friendship, a need so strong that he does not fully understand it. Five months into his sabbatical, he feels "like a hungry ghost: hungry for attention and affection—telephone calls, letters, and so on." Characteristically, Nouwen is utterly open about his emotional vulnerability. He feels abandoned, forgotten, and shadowed by a constant fear of rejection.

Nouwen, of course, had numerous close and supportive friends. In the book's foreword, Sue Mosteller notes that the original, unedited journal (it was cut in half for this book), mentioned more than 1,000 people in friendship, 600 by name. Yet Nouwen's loneliness, what he called "his inner wound," never went away.

The sabbatical year was spent at the homes of two friends, one in Massachusetts and one in New Jersey, where Nouwen had hoped to have lots of free time to pray and write. Yet during the year he was drawn into a frantic cycle of weddings, funerals, and visits. The regular travel left him tired and confused. Hauntingly, he complains about constant exhaustion and fatigue. On September 11, less than two weeks into his sabbatical, he writes: "Everything requires an immense effort, and after a



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

few hours of work I collapse in utter exhaustion." November 24: "I still do not understand why I keep being so exhausted." June 13: "Everything exhausts me, even putting on my clothes." The warnings seem clear, yet neither Nouwen nor his friends picked up on the signs. Astonishingly, he never thought to see a doctor.

"How much longer will I live?" he writes in December. "I could live another thirty years. Do I want to live that long? Or do I hope to be united with Christ sooner?"

Readers will marvel at the breadth of Nouwen's interests, from world affairs, music, and sports, to movies, poetry, and his great love for the Flying Rodleighs, a group of South African trapeze artists. He became close friends with them, filled several notebooks with material about them, and intended to write a book about the group.

Sabbatical Year also touches on themes developed in earlier books—particularly Nouwen's strong conviction that God's love can become manifest in suffering. "Where is God?" he asks. "God is where we are weak, vulnerable, and dependent. God is where the poor are, the hungry, the handicapped, the mentally ill, the elderly, the powerless." We learn much about Nouwen's evolving views on church issues. As a young man he thought that there was no salvation outside the Catholic church. He came to believe, however, that while "Jesus came to open the door to God's house, all human beings can walk through that door, whether they know about Jesus or not." His views on homosexuality changed, too, although his thoughts and feelings remained "very conflicted." Reflecting on the lives of his many friends who were homosexuals, he came to believe that "homosexuality is not a curse but a blessing for our society."

This journal reveals much about the heart and mind of a theologian who has touched the lives of millions, reminding us of the generosity of spirit and strength of Christian hope that marked Henry Nouwen's entire life. □

Bill Williams *is letters editor and religion book reviewer for the* Hartford Courant.

RELIGION BOOKNOTES

Lawrence S. Cunningham

Under the general editorship of Thomas Oden of Drew University, InterVarsity Press is publishing a series of books drawn from the writings of patristic biblical commentators. The editors, thanks to the enormous data bases now available, found thousands of citations and comments from the Greek, Syriac, and Latin writers of antiquity. In this volume on Mark, for example, the pericope describing the stilling of the storm (Mark 4:35–41) is meditated upon and scrutinized by Athanasius, Origen, Gregory Nazianzus, Basil the Great, Ephrem the Syrian, Saint Augustine, and the ancient hymn writer, Prudentius.

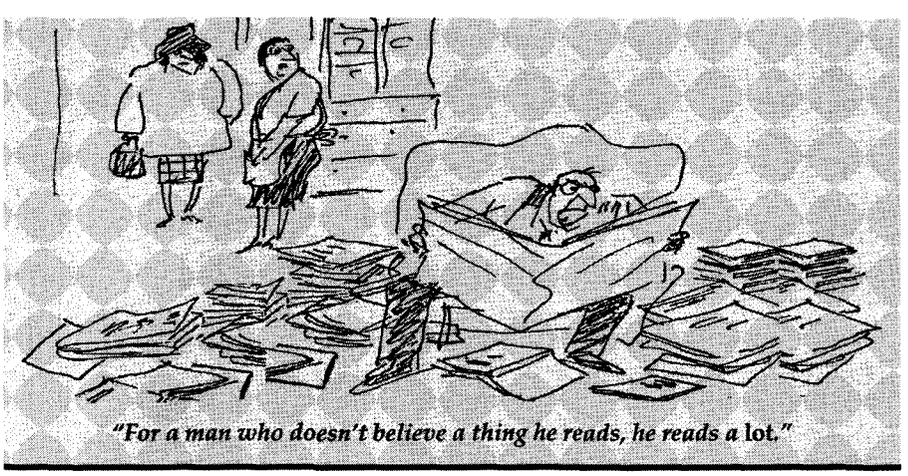
Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Mark
edited by Thomas C. Oden and Christopher A. Hall
InterVarsity Press, $39.99, 281 pp.

Thirteen volumes of Old Testament and twelve of New Testament commentary are planned. The result will be somewhat similar to what the Middle Ages called the "glossed" Bible. I keep this volume on Mark at my desk and read a bit each day. Other readers, to be sure, will use it as a resource for sermons, lesson plans, and so on.

I have a great love for the patristic writers, and I read both the biblical text and the comments in this handsomely turned out book with great pleasure. At times the commentators gloss the plain sense of the text and in other places they seek for the "spiritual" sense or allegorize the passage for moral or eschatological reasons. Those who use these commentaries will need to know something about the different levels of patristic interpretation. Origen, for example, does not "read" the way, say, the Venerable Bede reads. In future volumes the editors may wish to say something about this as a guide for the uninitiated.

How valuable is this project? It certainly reminds us that biblical exegesis did not begin in the postenlightenment period—there is hardly a textual problem in the entire Bible that Origen did not spot in the third century! It is also true that although someone might believe that he or she is reading the Bible "alone," the plain fact is that all biblical interpretation, either consciously or not, stands on a vast tradition. Thus, this series is a highly salutary call to take part in the great conversation about the meaning of the Word of God.

One final cautionary note. Our understanding of the Scriptures did not end with the eighth century. Even though it is tempting to argue that this approach of seeking the patristic consensus is a deeply ecumenical enterprise, as the editors intend it to be, it is equally true that it is only partial and not to



"For a man who doesn't believe a thing he reads, he reads a lot."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DON'T BLAME THE BARTENDER

Tonight Was a Long Time Coming

Could this priest be heading for his car? Let's hope not. Clearly, he's been drinking and he'd be putting in harm's way not only himself, but every occupant of every car on the road he drives.

Maybe he intends to walk. In which case, he might very well meet members of his congregation along the way. They can't fail to notice his unsteady gait and unfocused eyes. Will they feel shock or disappointment? More likely, what they'll feel is a sudden sense of abandonment.

Who's to blame? Alcoholism is a disease. The victim seldom is able to shake its tenacious grasp without a helping hand. Think about it. Didn't you notice, or at least suspect, ***before*** tonight, that Father had a chemical dependency problem? What steps have you taken?

One Out of Ten

Chemical dependency is a problem so widespread that at least ten percent of the Catholic clergy is afflicted. The popular impression is that men who are not treated are left to suffer the horrid consequences alone. That's simply not true. They don't suffer alone. Members of their dioceses fall victims, too.

If this priest decides tonight to drive in his impaired condition and has a serious accident, it could cost his diocese tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees and lawsuits – programs will have to be eliminated, parish improvements canceled, needy people deprived.

Shame shared.

You Need to Act Now

Time and time again, the court says, "They're your employees. You're responsible." ***If they get in an accident, the diocese is going to pay.***

As for those parishioners the priest may encounter if he instead decides to walk – no monetary system can repay the damage done them.

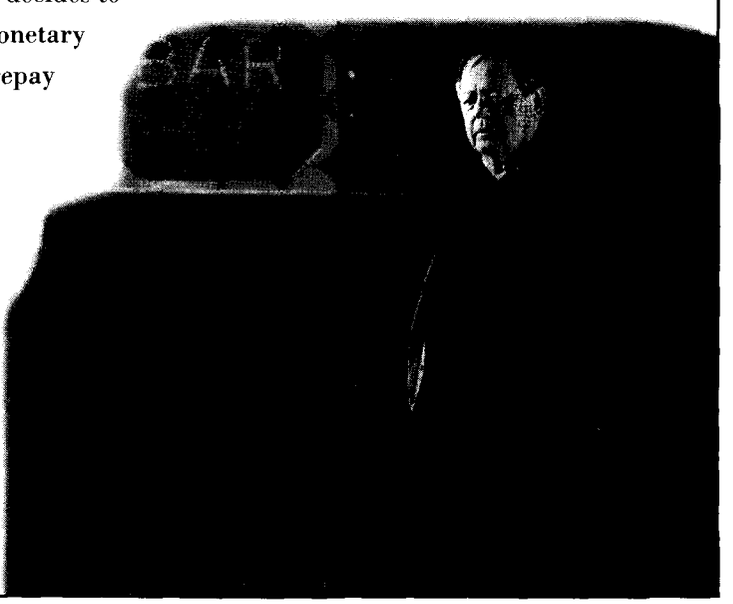
No Priest Is an Island

In the end, of course, it's not a moral issue for the alcoholic, but for you. We're only following our Faith in giving troubled clergy the "hand up" they require to continue their work with success and sobriety. They need us. More importantly, we need them. Denial by the priest or deacon is generally part of the problem, so contact us at Guest House for help on how to proceed. Call now. We are able to provide a complete spiritual, psychological and medical evaluation at no charge.

Guest House

Ph: 1-800-634-4155

4800 48th Street N.E.
Rochester, Minnesota 55903



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be seen as normative. Medieval, Reformed, and modern commentators have equally interesting and perceptive things to say about the Bible. In other words, this useful new series should be regarded as the first stage of an extended immersion in Scripture. As the Second Vatican Council wisely said, the apostolic preaching contained in the sacred books was "to be preserved by a succession of preachers until the end of time..." (*Dei verbum*, 2.8). As Gregory the Great reminds us, Scripture is like a vast river where lambs can wade near the shore and elephants swim farther out.

Ultramontanism is the name given to that tendency, most conspicuously prevalent in the nineteenth century but still apparent in certain contemporary quarters, that exalts the prestige, power, and authority of the papacy. Avery Dulles once called it "papalism." As such, the ultramontane forces of the last century crystallized in Vatican I's definition of papal infallibility. Conventional wisdom would have it that the ultramontanes were all of a piece. The studies in this instructive collection of essays argue that, even among papalists, there was a spectrum of views about papal power and jurisdiction. The essayists focus on six cardinals whose lives cross a continuum of time from roughly 1844 (when Cardinal Johannes von Geissel became archbishop of Cologne) to 1945, the year the less-than-lovable William O'Connell, archbishop of Boston, died.

Varieties of Ultramontanism
edited by Jeffrey von Arx, S. J.
Catholic University of America Press, $19.95, 152 pp.

It is a caricature to paint the ultramontanes only as a hide-bound group of reactionaries combating the more liberal streams of Catholic thought. As some of these essays show, for the cardinals from Germany and France—and to a degree even those from Ireland and Italy—the exaltation of the papacy was a conscious strategy to combat the hegemonic character of secular authority. In Germany the threat was Prussia. In France it was the postrevolutionary anticlerical secular state. In other words, by appealing to a supreme jurisdictional authority beyond the confines of the state, these churchmen found a way to stand against the pretensions and considerable power of the nation-state. Ireland's Cardinal Cullen sought a similar end, if one more focused on the rights of the church, especially concerning education.

There were other motives as well. Westminster's Cardinal Manning, a leader of the ultramontanes at Vatican I, stressed the critical need for church unity. Manning believed that papal authority was a sure bulwark against the increasingly secularized, positivistic, and agnostic forces abroad in English culture. *Pace* John Henry Newman, Manning was convinced that the assertion of papal power in general, and papal infallibility in particular, would instigate a mass conversion of Anglicans to the church of Rome. Dogmatic certitude was Manning's aim. At the council he argued against the historical objections to infallibility made by Döllinger and others. "Dogma overcomes history," Manning famously asserted. The Roman theologian Camillo Mazzella, S.J., who taught for a time at Maryland's Woodstock theologate, was the theorist behind such claims. Among other things, Mazzella was a shaper of the anti-Americanist condemnation issued under Leo XIII.

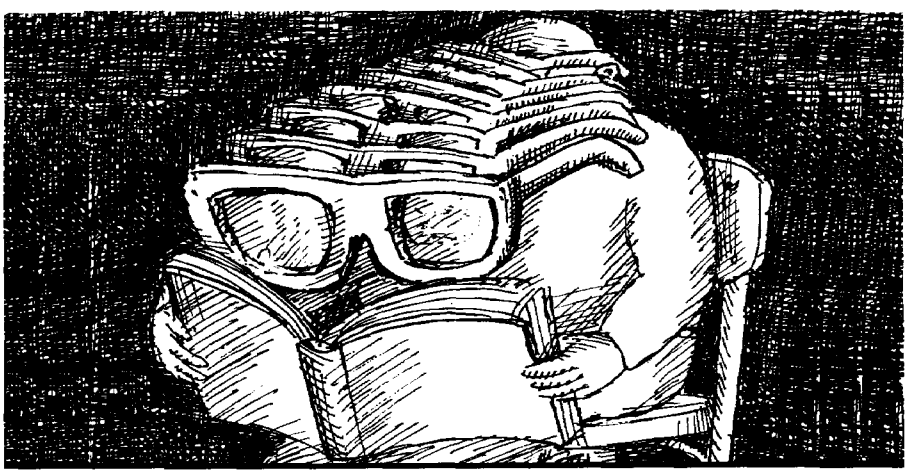
Cardinal William O'Connell of Boston notoriously instrumentalized papal allegiance as a way to consolidate his own hold over his archdiocese and his influence over the American church. Since the power of the bishop reflected the power of the papacy, he wanted no dilution of papal authority.

Varieties of Ultramontanes is short but very instructive. Casting the reactionary elements who controlled Vatican I against the progressives of Vatican II (and the latter did correct the direction of the former) as good guys versus bad guys oversimplifies. As these well-written essays demonstrate, at least some of the ultramontanes had good reasons for their passion for papal privilege, reasons deeply rooted in the convulsions of European society in the nineteenth century. In a curious way, to borrow from Manning, history did not overcome dogma, but it most decidedly shaped it.

I received a copy of Ray Brown's retreat notes just two weeks after the shocking news of his death last August. My admiration for Brown's work goes back nearly forty years, but our ties were even deeper than that of admiration. We both graduated from the same Florida high school—I was an altar boy at his first Mass! We stayed in touch over the years. He was, as it is universally admitted, a world-class scholar. But while composing his massive commentaries, Ray always found time to write books of a pastoral quality meant for the ordinary Christian.

A Retreat with John the Evangelist
by Raymond E. Brown
Saint Anthony Messenger Press, $8.95, 102 pp.

Brown takes an original tack in introducing a reader (presumably one on retreat; there are seven reflections) to John. He imagines himself a "translator" of



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

John, querying the Beloved Disciple (whom he describes as a "crusty character") about what he wrote. He gets off to a bad start by mentioning the writer's "gospel" only to be told that the author did not use the word; he preferred "message," but the original translator, not wanting to use "message," reluctantly called John's work the "gospel message."

Each "day" of the retreat follows a pattern. There is an opening prayer consisting of texts taken from John. In the body of each chapter the author explains to the translator why he wrote a particular scene, how it might have differed from the other Gospels (the translator explains something about these Gospels because John did not know them at first hand), how some of the things in the gospel message were elaborated in the writings of others in his circle (that is, the three "epistles" ascribed to John); how John's words could be misread, for example, by those who do not understand the context of some of the anti-Jewish polemics, is also touched on. At the end of each chapter, the translator, in lieu of a technical summary of the main points, appends both a contemporary reflection and a final prayer summarizing the discussion.

The precise merit of this little work is to remind us of how seamlessly Brown interweaves historical-critical scholarship into a deeply felt spirituality. In a few pages, and with some wit, he shows how the book came into its present form (the Beloved Disciple refuses to say whether he is John the Apostle but, teasingly, says, he is never mentioned by name in what came to be known as the New Testament). These minor observations are made while the author explains to the translator what he means and how he understands the person and significance of Jesus.

Brown points out that he wrote his first article on John in 1955, but, after many books and articles, he says he can still pick up the text and find things he has missed. Many of the things he has not missed are shared with us in these pages. It is this kind of writing that reminds us how much Ray Brown is going to be missed.

Women Preachers and Prophets
edited by Beverly Mayne Kienzle & Pamela J. Walker
University of California Press, $17.95, 362 pp.

Over the past two decades there has been a steady stream of publications, of varying quality, attempting to retrieve the voices of women in the Christian tradition. These works have either been anthologies of translations of works by women or studies of women in the Christian past. The Kiezle/Walker collection of essays has a very precise focus: How did women "preach" (or: Did women preach?) in the Christian past. Both the editors and the contributors understand the word "preach" to include public teaching, uttering prophecies, writing for the public, constructing messages through song, and so on. Such a broad understanding of preaching is not special pleading since it has the warrant of the tradition. One of the authors (Nicole Beriou) points out that some medieval scholastic writers considered the public reading of Scripture a form of preaching, since the reader proclaimed the literal sense of the text in the very act of reading aloud. If we take that medieval observation seriously, it follows that every reader at our liturgical assemblies is, in fact, a preacher.

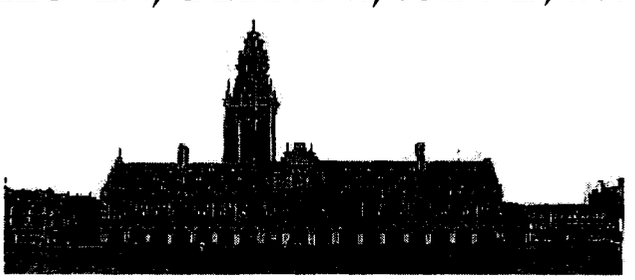
The essays fall into four groups: studies of early Christianity, the Middle Ages, the early modern period, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One *leitmotif* is the different ways in which Paul's injunction for women to remain silent in church (1 Cor. 14:34–36) played out. In the case of the seventeenth-century Ursulines, the admonishment was hauled out to force women to keep silence even when they only taught catechism to youngsters. On the other hand, it was also explained away in order to laud the fact that Mary of Magdala was the first witness of Christ's Resurrection, and hence the apostle to the Apostles (*apostola apostolorum*), or to justify the polemics against the learned pagans described in hagiographical accounts of Saint Catherine of Alexandria. What is very clear from these essays is the per-

A COLLABORATIVE VENTURE OF
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO, INSTITUTE OF PASTORAL STUDIES
AND KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT LEUVEN

GRADUATE THEOLOGY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES SUMMER SCHOOL

"IN THE HEART OF EUROPE"

LEUVEN, BELGIUM, JULY 5-23, 1999



ETHICS OF WAR, PEACE & RECONCILIATION
Dr. Johan Verstraeten and Dr. Didier Pollefeyt
PASTORAL COUNSELING: THEORY AND PRACTICE, *Dr. William Schmidt*

Contact: **The Institute of Pastoral Studies**
6525 N. Sheridan Rd., Chicago, IL 60626, 773-508-2320,
800-424-1238, fax 773-508-2319, http://www.luc.edu/depts/ips

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sistent attempt to restrict women from any activity in the public sphere.

Another common thread is the belief that if a woman of sanctity was inspired to speak (if she had a prophetic gift, for example), then it became a grace from God that was not to be easily ignored. The prophetic impulse, in other words, allowed for some exemption from the Pauline prohibition. The public preaching of a Hildegard of Bingen or the public remonstrations of Catherine of Siena or the mystical gifts of a Rose of Viterbo are good examples. Indeed, the various canons, synodal laws, and episcopal restrictions forbidding women to teach and preach in the medieval period suggest that many women were in fact speaking and teaching in their cloisters to audiences that included those from outside the monastic congregation.

In discussing the early modern and modern period, these essays tend to focus on the new forces brought about by the Reformation, where women had more space to preach and teach. Women were active, for example, in the Society of Friends and among the Moravians—two groups that put a high premium on religious experience as the source for authentic religious testimony. Later, in the nineteenth century, women had central roles as preachers and evangelists in the Salvation Army. In a fascinating essay by Jacqueline deVries, we learn how the women's suffragette movement in Great Britain borrowed quite consciously from Free Church methods of mass evangelization to rally support for the right of women to vote. One offshoot of that movement was its concern with the rights of women within the church and the concomitant worries of Anglican divines that too much elasticity in these matters (we are talking about the 1920s) would inevitably lead to demands for women priests. Roman Catholic women who supported the suffragette movement entertained the same idea.

There are nearly twenty essays in this volume. Since historically women did not have many opportunities to write, these scholars read carefully in ancillary material. Thus, female "Orantes" figures from paleo-Christian art as well as other iconographical, hagiographical, and sermonic sources are analyzed. Such studies are interesting in their own right, but for a theologian they raise important questions about the meaning of preaching and its relationship to teaching. Finally, the struggles over preaching and teaching influenced movements for social justice and equal rights in ways that now seem obvious, but did not at the time. □

Lawrence S. Cunningham *teaches theology at the University of Notre Dame.*

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 4)

horses, for example. However, horses exist only in the singular or as an individualized horse. But since the common nature as understood by Scotus is indifferent to its mode of existence, it can exist in the mind as a universal idea or in the individual entity as that particular entity. In either case, there is a real referent and thus the common nature is not a figment of Scotus's (or his prophet's) imagination.

THOMAS A. SHANNON

Reform at what price?

Patrick J. Lucey ["The Buck Stops Here," December 4, 1998] recalled for *Commonweal* readers that he endorsed Russ Feingold for election to the Senate in 1992—Lucey's pleasant memory, the nightmare of many Catholics. In the last Congress, Feingold helped sustain President Bill Clinton's veto of a partial-birth abortion ban. That vote pushed this country closer to a goal of the social Left: unrestricted access to abortion anytime, for any reason, paid for by private insurance or government, in this country and throughout the world.

Lucey ignored the social issues that have led many Catholics, including this writer, to become political conservatives. His article dealt solely with Feingold's advocacy of campaign finance "reform." He cited Feingold for "principle" in voluntarily limiting campaign spending, and urged others to support Feingold's solution to the present "corrupt" financing system.

Feingold's system will be vastly worse. Equalizing and limiting spending will throttle political free speech. Incumbency or celebrity status might help some conservatives overcome spending limits. But generally, McCain-Feingold and similar proposals will increase the power of the mass media to form and sway opinion on candidates and issues, and cripple the ability of candidates and private citizens to affect opinion. In an ideal world, the media would fairly and objectively report and discuss all developments of importance to the polity. In our real world, journalists and the media overwhelmingly hold and advocate the views of the Left, especially the social Left.

The "reform" that Feingold and Lucey favor might happen. Someone who does not want the social Left to be unchallenged prays it will not.

ALFRED J. LEMIRE
Worcester, Mass.

Prizefighter

What a delight it was to see John Hume's face on the cover of the November 20, 1998 issue of *Commonweal* ["Peace Itself Is the Prize"]. When many despair of finding a political leader with character, courage, and plain decency, John Hume renews our hope in the nobility of public service.

Mary Pat Kelly's article expresses well Hume's spirit and personal talent for fostering reconciliation. However, to understand Hume one must also know something of the Social Democratic and Labour Party which he leads and represents in both British and European Parliaments.

Usually the American press simplistically describes the SDLP as the "Catholic party." To be sure, the SDLP is Catholic in terms of its electoral base. However, the party is not a sectarian religious movement. Instead, the SDLP, an affiliate of the Socialist International, draws its political tactics, values, and vision from the rich tradition of European social democracy. John Hume is Catholic and a Social Democrat, a living point

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of convergence of two grand traditions not always noted for their compatibility.

Peace has become possible in Northern Ireland precisely because the interests of Catholic people have become championed by a nonsectarian party devoted to solidarity, economic justice, and equality for all, regardless of religion. That was always the vision of the labor and socialist movements of Ireland. Sadly, it never received much of a hearing. At a time when many dismiss the democratic Left as irrelevant, John Hume and the SDLP witness to a set of values that can liberate and foster peace, even in places where reconciliation seems impossible.

(REV.) MICHAEL KERPER
Franklin, N.H.

Thanks, but no thanks

Thanks to David McCabe for reminding us in his review of William Bennet's *The Death of Outrage* ["To the Woodshed," November 20, 1998] that we see only half of Bill Clinton when we condemn him with his actions. And thanks to McCabe for pointing out that none of us expects the president to be a moral leader.

I wonder, however, what "basic justice" Clinton has addressed and what "vision of the nation's future" McCabe has credited to a man who twice vetoed the ban on partial-birth abortion? How can McCabe speak of universal health care, equal access to education, and affordable housing as "more important principles...than Clinton's occasional trysts" when the president disregards the right-to-life that gives everything else status?

We blame ourselves for believing in the White House. As God said through the prophet Samuel: "And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the Lord will not answer you in that day" (1 Samuel 8:18).

ROB RYSER
Cross River, N.Y.

Clockwise

Shortly before I received your December 4, 1998 issue and Richard Guillardetz's "A Time to Wait," I received an envelope with a small white box inside. Even before I opened it, I knew it was another clock. During my career, at each move, I inevitably received at least one clock, until I had amassed at least six. Now, in retirement, I have received two more. Most, of course, have an "alarm" feature, and I have puzzled over this phenomenon of sending haunting time machines to those in retirement. Why, I wonder, do people do it? Is retirement not supposed to be a release from the daily necessity to work from nine to five? Are we not free to establish some new rhythm to our life?

Certainly my body is sending out new messages, as its internal clocks slow down, unwind, or begin to misfire, such as the dopamine imbalance which now nightly triggers my ever-increasing "restless leg syndrome."

Like Guillardetz, I too understand the wait attendant to the life of an unborn child, only now I must do it in anticipation of one day being a grandparent. And in this day and age—when Canadians aged 25–29 who have never been married exceeds 50 percent—that wait is becoming agonizingly longer. (I have three children in that range.)

Retirement, however, also begins to drive home that other "time to wait"—our mortality. My adoptive parents and my in-laws have ended their wait, and my wife and I have replaced them in this new season. But this is not the season of Advent. This is that other Christian season of waiting, Lent, with its completion of a journey with Christ.

Recently our pastor ended his homily with the question, "What can we do to sanctify time—to regain our peace and calm—to choose the better part?" He suggested morning and evening prayer, "Sunday worship," and recalling the hour of "three o'clock each day." A good beginning, no doubt, but I find myself more attuned to Guillardetz's contemplation "exercised in the mundane," from the slow preparation of a romantic Sunday meal with my wife to the frightening deadly potential of my chainsaw as I cut up one more tree that has fallen across my driveway.

More important even than this, during this "time of waiting" my real spirit is drawn to Boyte and Kari's article, "The Rebirth of Citizenship," in the same issue. Herein lies the footsteps of Christ. In retirement, I now choose to give the waiting period and my skills and knowledge to protecting the developmentally disabled, children with special needs, and our publicly supported Roman Catholic and public school systems from the ravages of our neoconservative governments.

Those of us in this new time of waiting can use both the seasons of Advent and Lent to give new and deeper meaning to John Paul II's statement that "time given to Christ is never time lost, but rather time gained, so that relationships and indeed our whole life may become more profoundly human" (*Dies domini*). And we can do it without a lot of unnecessary clocks.

JOHN A. BORST
Dryden, Ont.

Correction ■ In the cumulative index for Volume CXXV (December 18, 1998), an article by Elizabeth Kirkland Cahill from the July 17, 1998 issue was mistitled. The correct title is: "Vernon Robertson Is in Heaven."

CLASSIFIED

RATES: $1.10 per word; 12 word minimum. Discounts 5 percent, 3 times; 10 percent, 6 times; 15 percent, 12 times. Advance payment required. Discounts and monthly billing available for repeat advertisers. For additional information call 212-662-4200 or write COMMONWEAL, 475 Riverside Dr., Rm. 405, N.Y., N.Y. 10115.

Manuscripts Wanted

MANUSCRIPTS WANTED. ALL TYPES. Subsidy Publisher with 75-year tradition. 1-800-695-9599.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ON LINE

Thomas C. Widner

My New Year's resolution for 1998 was to become more attentive to my prayer life. I wanted to take greater advantage of the sacraments. In particular (shudder!), I thought I should go to confession more often.

So off I went on the first Saturday of the new year to be shriven through and through. A parish about five miles away offered confession for half an hour before noon on Saturdays. I thought I'd drive over, pop in, and spill my guts.

To my surprise, the church parking lot was nearly full. Must be something going on at the gym, I thought. Opening the church door, I discovered at least two score people kneeling in a well-lit church. Then I saw the line snaking from the confessional on the north wall around the east wall and extending around a corner. There must have been three dozen people in line waiting for a single confessional. Each one was careful to avert his or her eyes from others.

I hadn't seen a confessional line that long since I was in grade school, more than forty years ago. I knelt down in a pew to give this novel situation some thought. I'd already worked out my confession, but I had also carefully arranged the rest of my day. Looking at the line, I considered putting off the sacrament until another time.

While I was kneeling, more people entered the church. My attention was also drawn to the Christmas decorations, to the huge corpus of Christ hanging over the altar, and to the large crèche that dominated the side chapel in which the confessional was located. A steady stream of penitents would leave the confessional and then kneel before the crèche.

I hadn't really looked at a crèche in many years. I mean really looked at one. It was the day before the feast of the Epiphany, and the manger scene would soon be packed away for another year. I decided to get in line for confession; I figured I could wait it out. Meanwhile, people kept streaming into the church and soon the place was half-full. Then a second priest appeared and entered a confessional box. Even so, after twenty minutes I was still nowhere near getting to either priest.

Suddenly, the altar lights snapped on, and one priest emerged from the confessional. Within seconds he was vested, and began to say Mass. Then the second priest left his box. Those of us left on line—a few pilgrims stranded in a lonely island aisle—seemed like sinful stragglers in a sea of Christians praising the Lord.

I stayed for the liturgy. The priest's opening words explained that it was the first Saturday of the month. First Saturday! Of course. I vaguely remembered the devotion from childhood. It had something to do with the appearance of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima. Special favors are reserved for those who go to Mass on five first Saturdays of the month. That's all I could remember.

At first the whole scene had seemed like an anachronistic throwback. Yet the church was filled with about two hundred people gathered to honor Mary. After Mass, a confessional line immediately formed again. I joined it. The older priest's confessional had a face-to-face option. I wasn't in the mood for a face-to-face confession, and neither was anyone else. No one entered the face-to-face door. I said my confession to the older priest from behind the protection of a familiar grille.

Leaving the confessional, I knelt before the crèche to say my penance. The crude manger scene touched me in some unaccountable way. Who was this God-child? I focused my eyes on each figure, carefully and lovingly. I'm told that a child is a sign of hope and of the future. On that first Saturday, I believed it.

Some of my friends would find this scene bizarre, even threatening, pooh-poohing first Satuday devotion as a meaningless superstition. But the Mass wasn't pre-Vatican II. There were even women Eucharistic ministers. In his homily, the priest encouraged us to live our faith and not just to adore the baby Jesus. Both priests had left the confessionals so as not to confuse the sacraments by running a double-feature. All the correct liturgical practices had been followed.

Obviously, the practice of first Saturday was meaningful for a good many Catholics that day. You had to see it to believe it, to look at faces and see the people hungry for God's touch. You had to look with wonder at those reaching out to the God who lay in the manger. We often don't like to acknowledge the variety of Catholic devotional practices. And to be honest, I didn't take up the five first Saturdays devotion myself. But I'm grateful to the parish that took care of my sacramental needs on that first Saturday of January 1998. □

Start the New Year off with a visit to our updated website: subscribe on-line, send a letter to the editors, sample a recent issue, and more...

www.commonwealmagazine.org

Thomas C. Widner, S.J., *does retreat ministry at Milford Spirituality Center in Milford, Ohio.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FAITH MEETS REAL LIFE

From *Dead Man Walking* to the "Jesus Wars"

Sister Helen Prejean

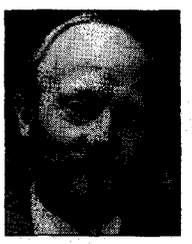
takes us on the faith journey behind and beyond the Oscar-winning film *Dead Man Walking*. She tells us the true story of her work with convicted killers and victims' families.

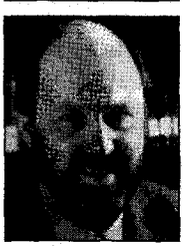
Thursday, February 4, 1999
7:30 pm lecture

Andrew Sung Park

argues that our usual concepts of sin and salvation focus far too much on the sinner's perspective and far too little on the way our wrongful actions impact others—and God. This inspiring theologian also reminds us of the cultural assumptions that influence our understanding of God.

Wednesday, March 3, 1999
7:30 pm lecture and discussion
6 pm reception





Marcus Borg
AND
N.T. Wright

debate their starkly opposing views on the real Jesus of history and what he means to us today. As friends, scholars and two of the most popular writers on Jesus, they agree to disagree—vigorously.

Thursday, February 18, 1999
7:30 pm program
6 pm reception

James H. Cone

offers us his view of the black experience of suffering as a way to know God. He covers everything from his own roots in Arkansas to the origins and present impact of black theology.

Wednesday, May 19, 1999
7:30 pm lecture and discussion
6 pm reception

WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

Washington National Cathedral, a center of learning for all people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (202) 537-2221.

Ticket Order Form

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

DAYTIME PHONE EVENING PHONE

FAX

Mail this form along with full payment by check or money order to:

PROGRAM OFFICE, WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL
MASSACHUSETTS AND WISCONSIN AVENUES, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20016-5098 (202) 537-2221

Please check the appropriate category below:

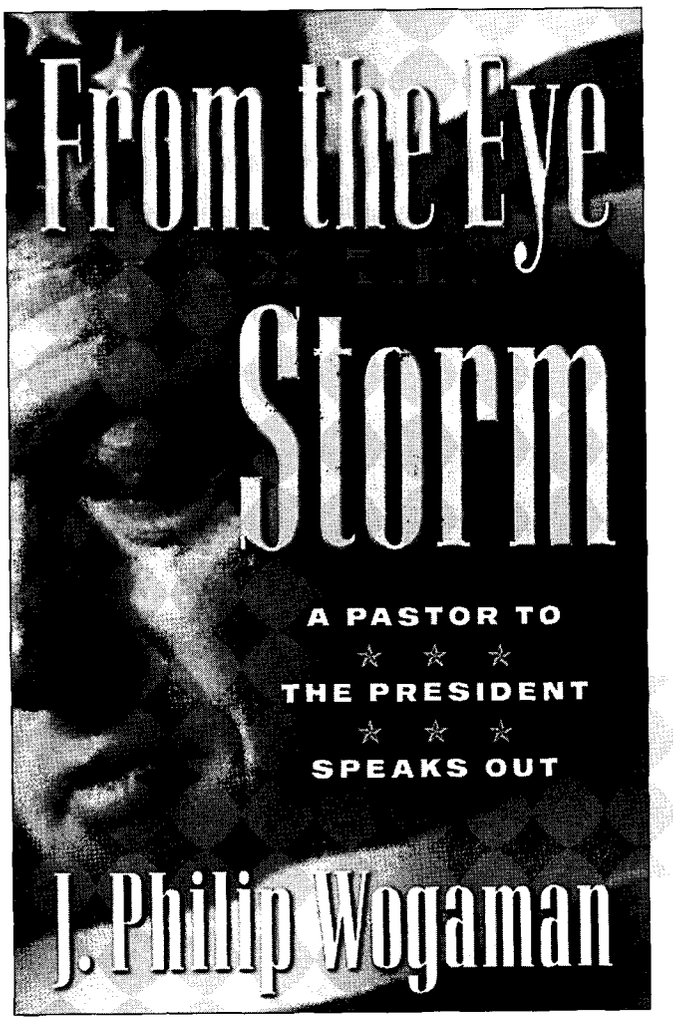
EVENT		REGULAR PRICE	STUDENT/ SENIOR
Helen Prejean	Program only	❑ $12	❑ $ 6
Borg/Wright	Program & reception	❑ $25	❑ $12
	Program only	❑ $12	❑ $ 6
Park	Program & reception	❑ $25	❑ $12
	Program only	❑ $12	❑ $ 6
Cone	Program & reception	❑ $25	❑ $12
	Program only	❑ $12	❑ $ 6

TOTAL DUE: $_____ ***Please make checks payable to Washington National Cathedral.***

Your order will be acknowledged by mail or by phone. Please call for refund policy. Tickets will also be available at the door.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A BOOK FOR AMERICANS IN CRISIS



"This book represents the thoughtful moral and political insights of one of America's wisest and most humane religious leaders. It is an invaluable contribution to our understanding of both the contemporary and historical import of the unique crisis that has seized the Clinton presidency."

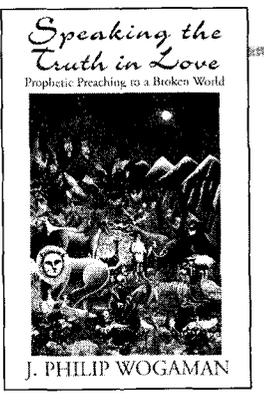
—George McGovern
U.S. Senator (S.D.) (ret.)

FROM THE EYE OF THE STORM
A Pastor to the President Speaks Out
J. Philip Wogaman
Cloth $12.00 • (Canada *$18.00*)

Speaking the Truth in Love
Prophetic Preaching to a Broken World
J. Philip Wogaman

Wogaman discusses the biblical and theological grounding of prophetic preaching, moral decision making, and appropriate issues for discussion from the pulpit. He also includes his own most compelling sermons, many preached in the midst of controversial events.

Paper $12.00 (Canada $18.00) • ISBN: 0664-25774-7 • 144 pages



WESTMINSTER
JOHN KNOX PRESS

At your bookstore, your Cokesbury bookstore or
call (800) 227-2872 • ww.wjk.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED